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WITHDRAWN

EDITORIAL

THE VICAR & THE VIRAGO

Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's woman at the United Nations, might not mind being called a "virago" (in its archaic meaning of "a woman with a masculine strength or spirit"), though she would probably object to the other things Alexander Haig must call her behind her back. (Termagant? Shrew?) Publicly, and in a slightly more neutral vein, he has put her down as a mere "company commander."

None of this backbiting would matter to the rest of us if it did not reveal something about the drift of foreign policy in this government—moving rapidly rightward, along a hard line. It is strange to see Haig as an island of relative sense in the reactionary currents of Reagan's foreign policy. After all, he began his career at the State Department by virtually declaring war on Central America, seeing "world Communism" behind every banana tree on that tortured isthmus. But compared with smiling Judge Clark at Reagan's right hand, glowering Weinberger at the Pentagon and truculent Kirkpatrick at the United Nations, Haig looks almost civilized.

Of course, not one of them, starting with Haig, can be trusted to act either practically or intelligently, or to show any "decent respect to the opinions of mankind." But what is increasingly clear is that the new intransigence comes from the top and that Ambassador Kirkpatrick more accurately reflects Reagan's views than does Vicar Haig.

Any doubt about that vanished with Reagan's speech at the U.N. session on disarmament, full of tough talk and not even a mention of the Soviet offer to negotiate a no-first-use nuclear pact. So begin the U.S.-U.S.S.R. negotiations on disarmament. So ends any hope of serious diplomacy about the world's one burning issue. The time was never more ripe for a politically active peace movement in this country.

MINORITY OF ONE
Denise Levertov

MOMENT OF TRUTH
Jacobo Timerman

RELIGION AND REBELLION IN EL SALVADOR
Clifford Krauss

THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR
Mansour Farhang

A WHIFF OF FASCISM
Philip Green

TO THE POLAND STATION

SOLIDARITY—LEST WE [illegible]ORGET

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[illegible]INGER

Paris

Those on the left who cherished the illusion that Poland would somehow vanish from the news and that Solidarity would disappear from our political consciousness have been disappointed. A wave of strikes and skirmishes with the police spread throughout Poland recently in defiance of martial law; the inevitable lull that followed Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's military clampdown thus lasted less than six months. The situation in Poland must again be watched with the faint hope of a compromise and the very real fear of a bloody explosion.

The Polish story is far from finished. Its impact on socialists in the West, already significant, will increase in coming months. Jaruzelski's coup has raised the curtain on the last act of the Western European schism in the once monolithic international Communist movement. It has also confronted the left in the West with two problems—or rather a pair of dangerous pitfalls. The first of these is the danger for the left of becoming exclusively preoccupied with its own important struggles and ignoring the continuing Polish drama. The second pitfall is more properly a trap: the right's use of the latest tragedy in an allegedly socialist country to discredit the struggle for socialism altogether. Let us take up these matters in order.

First, the Communist schism in the West. *Moscow locuta, causa finita.* There was a time, barely a quarter of a century ago, when Communist parties with genuine popular roots responded to the orders of the Kremlin with the discipline of military battalions. To break with the party, or to be excommunicated from it, were

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LETTERS.

SPRINGER DENIES CHARGE

Berlin

"Covert Charge" by Murray Waas [*The Nation*, June 19] alleges that in the early 1950s, "the Central Intelligence Agency secretly funneled some $7 million to West German press baron Axel Springer." We state emphatically that neither Axel Springer personally nor his company ever received covert or open funds from the C.I.A. or any other intelligence or governmental agency.

Christian Kracht
Axel Springer Gesellschaft

WAAS REPLIES

Huntington Valley, Pa.

I stand by my story, which was based on interviews with four sources, two of whom are former intelligence officials, and documentary evidence. *Murray Waas*

ABBIE: DON'T BUY THIS BOOK

Fineview, N.Y.

Don Lessem's review of my latest book, *Square Dancing in the Ice Age* ["Abbie, Again," *The Nation*, June 19], contains the standard dozen errors, i.e., wrong prison, not married, etc. Like most reviewers he can't see what's written because he's watching me too much, and besides, he's not even doing that well. The big book-promotion tour he wrote I was headed on never happened. Instead I returned to the life of Barry Freed and the fight against the impending transport of nuclear wastes from Canada to South Carolina for reprocessing into weapons-grade material. I don't have to "search for causes": the only bridge between the United States and Canada to allow such traffic is exactly two miles down the road. I could use some help from people who, unlike Lessem, see good causes as *not* hopeless.

For information on the soon-to-be-coming dangerous cargo and the battle to stop it, write Save the River, Thousand Islands, New York 13624. As to advising people to buy *Square Dancing in the Ice Age*, don't. It's overpriced by half.

Abbie Hoffman

JEWS WITHOUT POLITICS

Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Earl Shorris has gone on a *tour de force*, riding a Sherman tank over a subject that deserves a more delicate, a more sensitive, treatment ["The Jews of the New Right," *The Nation*, May 8].

I came of age politically in the turbulence of the 1930s. There was fascism, and opposed to it were communism and socialism and democratic capitalism. Political choices were simpler then. Though we were fragmented in our different beliefs, we were united in our hatred of fascism.

But after Hitler and after Auschwitz a new and frightening presence hovered above all of our differences. The Holocaust was a stubborn and persistent fact that swept our politics away. It seemed to transcend politics; it entered realms of human experience foreign to study. Scholarly attempts to explain it became blasphemous. It invaded us and became our litmus test by which we would measure good and evil. We were thrust back to an earlier generation's alarmist view of world politics: "Is it good or bad for the Jews?"

Did we lose something in that abandonment of liberal politics? When the Soviet Union and Third World countries in step with Arab states speak out consistently against Israel; when Jewish people are shot down in European cities; when the long arm of the new anti-Jewish terror vandalizes synagogues and desecrates cemeteries; when American blacks join the anti-Jewish terror by cozying up to the Palestinians, we are then, with Daniel Bell, done with ideology. There is only the legacy of Auschwitz.

I wish that Shorris had come to us in this moment in the wilderness and restored our belief in politics, but I confess a good part of me shares the new nihilism—not the nihilism of our ethical commandments but of the politics I once made my home, along with labor groups and other minorities. . . .

Shorris raced too rapidly. God knows I want to find a sane place in contemporary liberal politics, but whom shall I look to? "Two extravagances," Pascal wrote, "to exclude Reason, to admit only Reason." Which way Shorris? *Charles Ansell*

SHORRIS REPLIES

New York City

The questions Charles Ansell raises are among those that set me to writing the book *Jews Without Mercy*, from which the article was excerpted. All the questions were not answered in the book, however: I have no explanation for the murder of the Jews of Europe; Auschwitz is a darkness I cannot penetrate. What can be understood is that there is a real distinction between murder and defeat. Hitler murdered millions of Jews; whether he defeated us was not determined there.

If the Nazis "swept our politics away," as Ansell suggests, then we have been defeated, become an extension of the darkness, been reduced again to the horde that wandered in the desert before Sinai, before the Law.

Consider the Law as the codification of our ethical impulse; consider the Law as politics, binding us together in community. Consider the Law as immutable, bearing the primitivistic stamp of the first ethical religion; consider that the Law, unlike laws written by people, cannot be swept away in the corrupt courts of totalitarian systems.

Nothing has been swept away. We were not defeated. Hitler was defeated. Ansell and I, in our ethical existence, in our love of mercy, in our political life, are the antithesis of Auschwitz, the true monuments to the defeat of madness and murder, the Law made alive—politics.

What proof have I that this is so?

Atomized individuals cannot do politics. We must rise above unmitigated self-interest. There must be a possibility of mercy before we can do politics. And we have done that much, we have shown signs of victory. Ansell's letter, my response, this magazine, all are the doing of politics. We are speaking to each other. We are speaking honestly, in an ethical way. Our purpose is to extend the realm of mercy. What could be more political? How could we better defeat the darkness? *Earl Shorris*

DOHRN ON FORCED TESTIMONY

New York City

The editorial "Crime Victims" [*The Nation*, June 12] fails to mention the six people jailed for contempt of the grand jury besides myself [see Letters, *The Nation*, June 26].

Jerry Gaines, a black woman and mother of eight, was subpoenaed after her Mississippi farmhouse was raided by a SWAT squad with four tanks, two helicopters and automatic weapons. The complaint against Fulani Sunni-Ali (Cynthia Boston), which was the basis for the raid, was dropped by the government when she proved her innocence. Yet the two women were later subpoenaed by U.S. Attorney John Martin's grand jury, before which their choice—though they had not been charged with any crime—was to collaborate or go to jail. Gaines has been in jail for four months.

Yaasmyn Fula, a black woman and mother of a 4-year-old son, was locked up for twenty-three hours a day and denied contact with her child until her hunger strike forced her jailers to return her to the prison's general population. A longtime organizer in the black community, she has spent years obtaining and interpreting COINTELPRO files that document the government's secret war against the black liberation movement. A third black woman, Asha Thornton, who was taken into custody by agents while walking with her son and a friend's baby, was held as a "material witness." That pretext was dropped three weeks later when she was given a grand jury subpoena. In addition, Eve Rosahn, Dr. Allen Berkman and Shaheen Malik Jabbar have refused to collaborate with the grand jury.

One final word of caution: Wait and hear from those indicted before assuming they are guilty of crimes for which there is "no valid defense." Ronald Reagan's use of terrorism to cover human conditions of great suffering must be given no quarter.

Bernardine Dohrn

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EDITORIALS.

E.R.A.: R.I.P.?

The country is for the Equal Rights Amendment; 73 percent of all Americans support it, according to a recent Harris poll. It's been endorsed by more than 450 national organizations, representing 50 million Americans from the A.F.L.-C.I.O. to the Democratic Party, from the Y.W.C.A. to the American Jewish Committee.

If the country's for it, why is the E.R.A. about to go down in defeat?

It wasn't the country that was voting. It was the state lawmakers, almost exclusively male, in fifteen conservative Southern and Western states. In these states and their legislatures, the forces of the right—the John Birch Society, the Farm Bureau, The Eagle Forum, together with fundamentalists, the Mormon Church and conservative Catholics—hold sway.

But the E.R.A. also failed because it never took on a moral imperative—never generated the kind of seismic shift in public and establishment opinion that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and to the end of the Vietnam War. These are conservative times, quite different from a decade ago when, with the civil rights, antiwar and women's liberation movements at high tide, the E.R.A. sailed through Congress and twenty-two state legislatures in one year. Even many feminists didn't consider the E.R.A. a top priority, or thought it wouldn't accomplish much, until opponents turned the amendment into a symbolic test of the strength of the women's movement.

But the fact remains, as Gloria Steinem continues to point out, that women aren't taken seriously. Sexism is still not considered the outrage that racism or anti-Semitism is. (The

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need to dramatize the idea that women's rights are also a cause worth dying for drove ex-Mormon Sonia Johnson to her month-long fast for the E.R.A.) Most men, even those who endorse the amendment, stayed out of the fight. Support from union leaders and politicians consisted mainly of telephone calls and press conferences; few used the power of their offices to wheel and deal or twist arms on behalf of the E.R.A.

Of course, as Bella Abzug has noted, just because the Democratic Party is on record in favor of the amendment does not mean that the people who wield political and economic power in the party (or the country) are for it. The E.R.A. could have sparked an all-out legal attack on sex discrimination in American political and economic life. It would have been costly to corporations, whose profits depend in part on the use of women as cheap labor. (The passage of an equal rights amendment in Pennsylvania led to a challenge to discriminatory insurance rates, which, according to the National Organization for Women, net insurance companies millions of dollars each year.) Under the E.R.A., women could have challenged male privilege in unions and the work force. (Feminists also used the Pennsylvania amendment to save the jobs of over half the women working for a state agency. Originally, layoffs were to be carried out on the basis of seniority alone, so that women would have been the first to lose their jobs.)

But could feminists have prevailed if they'd done things differently? Like most liberal movements schooled in national campaigns, feminists were ill-equipped, organizationally, to politick district-by-district in every state. The serious effort for the E.R.A. began too late—only a year ago, when NOW launched its "Countdown" campaign targeting six states for ratification drives. By January, NOW was blitzing four states with celebrities, television ads and organizers. But these tactics were a poor substitute for the grass-roots, religious-based network that STOP E.R.A. had had in place for years. E.R.A. supporters didn't speak with one voice about the amendment. (This was perhaps inevitable. The coalition in favor of the amendment included feminists who think abortion, gay rights and the draft—all more controversial than the E.R.A.—are inextricably tied to women's equality, and women who see no connection and may even oppose those feminist goals.) But given the controversy about what the vaguely worded amendment would really do, the lack of unanimity hurt. Militance was also cooled by many feminists who, to placate moderate supporters, talked as if the amendment were merely symbolic.

Feminists may have lost the battle, but they haven't lost the war—yet. While the E.R.A.'s defeat is a major blow and will fuel the anti-abortion campaign, the rights that women have won in the last decade can't be abolished overnight. The women's movement garnered valuable political experience in the E.R.A. fight and will use it in the fall elections, in a new drive for the E.R.A. and in a defense of abortion rights. (NOW, whose membership nearly doubled during the struggle to pass the amendment, has raised $1.3 million a month since December, outstripping Senator Jesse Helms and the Democratic Party.) As NOW President Elly Smeal put it recently, "We're in a win-win situation. Either we get E.R.A. or we get millions of furious women who've been denied their rights."

WORDS OF WELCOME

Two new names have been added to the masthead of this week's issue. They are Daniel Singer and Herman Schwartz, both of whose bylines should be familiar to *Nation* readers (Schwartz's less so, perhaps, since it was frequently subsumed in the editorial "we").

Singer, who will be *The Nation*'s European correspondent based in Paris, describes himself as a "passportless cosmopolitan," in spirit at least. Born in Warsaw, he was brought up in France, Switzerland and England, and served for several years as East European and Paris correspondent for *The Economist*. In 1968 he wrote a book on the May general strike in France entitled *Prelude to Revolution*. Since then, he has devoted himself to writing books and to freelance magazine work and radio commentaries for the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Our new contributing editor, Herman Schwartz, has served in several capacities with the New York State and Federal governments, most recently as chief counsel and staff director of the Senate Anti-Trust and Monopoly Subcommittee from 1978 through 1981. He is currently professor of law at the American University's Washington College of Law.

Thinking Small

It could have been predicted by any competent political scientist that last month's election in Mauritius would produce a marked swing to the left. Could have been, but wasn't. Who cares about an island of barely 1 million people, moored far out beyond Madagascar in the Indian Ocean? The answer is that the great powers have often wished they had paid more attention to the fate of small nations—and Mauritius will (we hope) prove no exception.

After a long colonial occupation, the island achieved independence in 1968. The year was significant in that the leaders of the new ruling party, the Mauritian Militant Movement (M.M.M.), had been influenced by the French upheaval of that year and still claim a strong relationship with the French Socialist Party. The size of their recent electoral victory shows a heartening triumph over the ethnic divisions—between Creole and Moslem, Sino-Mauritian and Indo-Mauritian—that have poisoned life on the island for so long.

Then there is another ethnic group on Mauritius, perhaps the most forgotten and abandoned group of people in the world. By 1972, the population of Diego Garcia, a small island in the neighboring Chagos archipelago, had been uprooted and transported forcibly by Britain to the shantytowns of Port Louis. These people were cleared out of their homes in

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order to make room for a huge U.S. air and naval base. No Falkland-style tears were shed for this band of plucky islanders. But the M.M.M. says, quite simply, that they ought to be allowed to go home.

Since Port Louis is itself a harbor of some importance, and since the M.M.M. has announced that it will close it to U.S. and Soviet warships, the demand may possibly be heard. Many British politicians have a bad conscience about their Diego Garcia policy, and many Americans have yet to learn what has been done in their name. The familiar prospect of an "unfriendly," albeit elected, government in Mauritius may help to concentrate a few minds.

There will be hypocrisy to be endured before this happens: the Reagan Administration may claim that it cannot speak for the British, who formally hold the lease. But such delaying tactics will be hard to sustain. The idea of a "zone of peace" in the Indian Ocean is gaining momentum, and it is fundamentally incompatible with enterprises like Diego Garcia. Until recently, an antique oligarchy ran Mauritius chiefly through a state of emergency. Its leader, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, boasted to voters that he would be 100 years old in the year 2000 and campaigned as a fatherly figure on an island where graduate unemployment is a serious problem. Now he and his party have disappeared politically.

Editorial writers in the establishment press tend to write about elections like that in Mauritius as if they were quaint affairs taking place in obscure backwaters. On the contrary, with any luck the great powers will have to listen to the verdict of the Mauritian electorate and perhaps even make some redress to the Diego Garcians for their appalling wrongs.

That Other Party

As attention focuses on last weekend's Democratic Party midterm convention in Philadelphia, we rise to remind you that its 1980 goad and gadfly, the Citizens Party, is still alive and buzzing. It hasn't been an easy road for the Citizens Party, but then no one ever thought it would be. In fact there were many who predicted it would never survive the 1980 elections. We are happy to note that not only has it lasted but, at least in terms of electoral participation, it has grown.

The achievement in 1980 was significant in itself. Despite the problems third-party movements face in this country, the Citizens Party managed to get Barry Commoner and LaDonna Harris on the ballot in thirty states, including almost all of the most populous ones, and that ticket drew almost a quarter of a million votes. At the same time the party fielded thirty-eight other candidates for state and local offices in eleven states.

The next year's performance was even better. Though it was an off year, the party contested fifty-eight seats in fourteen states—and won three of them. Terry Bouricius was elected to the City Council in Burlington, Vermont, and Carolyn Micklas and Michael Preston won seats on school boards in Schenectady and Seattle. In a number of other races, though the Citizens Party entrants did not win, they improved their support strikingly, gathering from 26 to 49 percent of the votes in five places.

So far this year the party has gone after twenty-nine seats in three states, and won two additional seats on the Burlington City Council. And this fall it will contest at least seventy-six races, including twenty-one for the U.S. Senate and House and three (in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Texas) for governor. That number will almost certainly grow before final filing dates.

The biennial convention of the party in New York City over the Memorial Day weekend drew some 250 participants from twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia, indicating that the third-party idea still draws wide support. It also drew representatives of "green parties" from West Germany, Britain and the Netherlands, who, together with the Citizens Party, announced the establishment of a European/American Peace Alliance to work for nuclear control and disarmament.

Predictions about the fate of political movements in America, especially electoral ones, are risky indeed. But as one of the few reasonable alternatives to the exhausted and hidebound major parties, the Citizens Party certainly stands a chance of putting itself on the political map, particularly if it does well this fall.

Minority of One

On June 14 I received a telephone call from a woman in New York City who read me the text of a letter on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which she hoped I would sign before it was sent to *The New York Times*. The letter outlined clearly the disgusting and inhuman attack by Israeli forces on civilians fleeing the battle, the indiscriminate bombing of towns and villages, and the cynical role played by the United States (there and elsewhere) as a supplier of arms. I would very much have liked to sign the letter, but I felt unable to do so because it seemed to me to lack two essential additional components: (*1*) acknowledgment that Palestinians have also committed terrorist acts against equally innocent civilians, coupled with a statement to the effect that one crime, one act of terrorism, *never justifies another*, and that the "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" principle is hideous and utterly immoral, and (*2*) acknowledgment that there is *in Israel* a considerable and horrified opposition to the policies of vengeance and aggression.

These omissions caused me to feel painfully conflicted about an otherwise excellent letter, which includes among its

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signers some of the people I most admire. As a person of half-Jewish ancestry, I feel deeply ashamed of, and angry at, the state of Israel for its militaristic, racist, neofascistic character; yet, as a lifelong leftist, I feel as deeply disturbed by signs of increasing anti-Semitism on the left (as well as generally) in this country, and am anxious therefore to insure that all statements protesting Israeli wrongdoing should be clearly made from a standpoint that condemns crimes on *both* sides and acknowledges the right to exist both of Israel and of an independent Palestinian state.

A parallel conflict of loyalties based on *values* is presented by the Falkland Islands war. I am half Welsh, and grew up in England, but I feel nothing but contempt for Margaret Thatcher and rage at her policies, domestic and foreign. To me she is Genghis Attila Thatcher. At the same time, when I see the radical left, in the United States and throughout the world (including the left in Cuba and Nicaragua), supporting Argentina, a regime of torture and bestial oppression, in this miserable war between two *equally wrong* sides, I am dismayed and disgusted. The losers in the war are a few harmless sheepherder families of British origin, the young dead and mutilated British and Argentine soldiers, and those who loved them.

I've said that I'm a lifelong leftist—I'm also a lifelong non-joiner, and these instances of conflict provide concrete reasons why I, like many others, continue, while trying to cooperate with various organizations in the struggle for peace and justice, to remain in that painful and often lonely independent position. DENISE LEVERTOV

Denise Levertov is a poet. Her two most recent books are one of prose, Light Up the Cave, *and one of poetry,* Candles in Babylon *(both New Directions).*

Moment of Truth

Tel Aviv

It is difficult to convince the Israelis that a political solution of a problem is preferable to a military solution. After all, the Israeli Army has never experienced a defeat.

But it is curious that convincing the Palestinians of this truth has proved to be impossible. The Palestinians have been repeatedly defeated on the field of battle, and yet they have never carried a political offensive to its ultimate conclusion. Their political successes in recent years have been neutralized by the military fantasies of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which have driven it to terrorism.

Despite having been permitted to have diplomatic representation in nearly 100 countries (substantially more than have recognized Israel), despite having been designated by the European Community as a legitimate voice in the solution of the Palestine problem, despite the fact that the P.L.O.'s leader, Yasir Arafat, has been received in important countries (most recently India) with the honors accorded to a head of state, the P.L.O. has failed to capitalize on its opportunities. Instead, it clung to the hope that this political acceptance would, at some point, be translated into military support against Israel.

What the P.L.O. failed to comprehend was that recognition of Israel's right to a peaceful and independent existence would have been a far more fruitful approach. No Israeli government could have withstood the diplomatic pressure that such recognition would have produced, pressure which would have come from the United States as well as from other nations. Israel could have delayed negotiations and stalled on reaching agreements, but it would inevitably have had to accept the existence of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Israel would certainly have demanded that such a state be demilitarized—creating a Palestinian Austria. And although small groups of Palestinian terrorists, backed by Russia and Libya, and also, perhaps, by Syria and Iraq, might have continued to attack Israel, the Palestinian state would have had support from Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan in the Arab camp, as well as from Western Europe and the United States.

Why did Arafat never attempt such a strategy? I believe it was because of his totalitarian mentality, because of his inability to imagine a democratic process for the Middle East.

During the years of struggle for the creation of the state of Israel in the 1930s and 1940s, the Zionist movement had political leaders, especially David Ben-Gurion and the founders of the Haganah, who knew how to neutralize the terrorist groups of Menachem Begin. The Palestinian movement has no leaders of similar stature who are able to influence Arafat. Imagine what would have happened to the Zionist movement and to the prospects for a Jewish state if Begin had replaced Ben-Gurion during the 1930s. Instead of a Palestinian diaspora, there would have been an Israeli one.

The Spanish bullfighter knows that there comes a moment when he can neither lie nor engage in fantasy; he faces the bull. He must kill or die. The Spanish have a name for this time: the moment of truth. If the Palestinians had recognized the state of Israel, if their leaders had said in public what they whispered in private, they would have confronted Israel with the moment of truth. They were unable to speak out because of the danger of assassination, but that is the risk of political leadership.

If European leaders like Bruno Kreisky, François Mitterrand, Olof Palme and Felipe Gonzalez had demanded that the P.L.O. recognize the state of Israel and threatened to close its offices in their countries if it refused, they would have put Arafat face to face with his moment of truth, and perhaps have saved him while strengthening the cause of the Palestinian people.

If progressives around the world, especially on the left, whose natural tendency is toward pacifism and political dialogue, had analyzed Arafat's aggressiveness, his fascist ideas, as they have analyzed other political groups, principally in Central America, they might have nullified the effects of his military fantasies. They would have exposed the irrationality of the Palestinian "army," which was trained by an oppressive power, Russia, and integrated with the terrorists and the reckless of the world—the

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Argentine *montoneros*, the Red Brigades of Germany, Japan and Italy, the revolutionary "army" of Ireland, the Basque separatists of Spain.

When one realizes the large number of leaders of nations and political movements who were incapable of forcing Arafat to draw upon the political capital represented by the recognition of Israel, one trembles—not so much for the future of the Middle East as for the future of humanity.

Immediately after the June 3 attempt on the life of the Israeli ambassador in London, two things were known: the act was not the responsibility of the P.L.O., and the Israeli government could no longer resist pressure from Gen. Ariel Sharon to launch his long-expected invasion of Lebanon, which he had previously suspended four times. Even at that late hour, a declaration by Arafat, immediately endorsed by the governments of Europe, repudiating the assassination attempt and recognizing the state of Israel would have held Sharon's tanks in check, and it would have compelled the Reagan Administration to make its last-minute warnings more forceful. But there was a collective failure of political will, and this opportunity for collective security, like so many others in this frightful century, was lost.

Today, it is the United States that faces the moment of truth—perhaps its Congress even more than its Administration. A new opportunity is opening up in the Middle East. Like every new opportunity, it is born in blood. Criminal? Yes. But as Antoine Boulay de la Meurthe said of the execution of the Duke D'Enghien, it is worse than a crime, it is a blunder. Failure on the part of imaginative, democratic politicians in the United States to take advantage of the opportunity for making peace in the Middle East and to award the right of self-determination to the Palestinian people would be worse than a crime; it would be a blunder.

We all know the reason for the U.S. influence on Israel. President Carter used his leverage to impose a peace between Egypt and Israel. President Reagan could also use it, or he could deny that he had it. But he knows that nobody will be misled about the magnitude of that influence.

No one, especially the European allies, could refuse to collaborate with the United States in moving toward an objective about which it is difficult to argue: collective security. Or an objective that is impossible to reject: self-determination for all the peoples of the Middle East.

"If you want peace, defend life," said Pope Paul VI. Though it is but eighteen years since he was in the region, nobody in the Middle East seems to remember it.

JACOBO TIMERMAN

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ARTICLES.

THEIR BIBLE IS THE BIBLE

Religious Roots Of Rebellion in El Salvador

CLIFFORD KRAUSS

"The Christian base communities are the greatest threat to military dictatorships throughout Latin America."

—Maryknoll Sister Ita Ford, three weeks before she and three other American churchwomen were murdered in El Salvador.

In the rebel-controlled hamlet of Conacaste, El Salvador, about thirty-five peasants and guerrillas dropped their work on a hot January afternoon and gathered in a dim little church to learn about revolution—from the Bible, not the *Communist Manifesto*. At a free-form "celebration of the word" Roman Catholic service, a leathery 38-year-old peasant lay minister named Marcelin read passages from the books of St. Matthew and Corinthians warning against egotism and selfishness and urging patience and generosity. "That is the word of God," Marcelin would exclaim from time to time, adding a bit of scriptural commentary or, after thumbing through his New Testament, a pertinent anecdote. "The word of God is for us to put into action, to develop our mission. God came to Earth to liberate man. If we want to create a new society, we have to sacrifice, we have to suffer."

When Secretary of State Alexander Haig speaks of getting to "the source" of El Salvador's revolution, he hardly has the Gospel in mind. Yet during the three weeks I spent hiking behind guerrilla lines in the mountains of Chalatenango province, I saw no Cuban or Nicaraguan advisers. In this my experiences were similar to those of other American reporters traveling in other rebel regions. The rebels appear to be in desperately short supply of weapons and ammunition despite alleged Eastern bloc military aid flowing through Nicaragua. The People's Church, whose radical interpretation of Catholic theology nourishes the revolution, is at least as important as Cuba and Nicaragua to the rebel cause in El Salvador.

Exodus is the favorite book of the Old Testament in Chalatenango; the peasants identify strongly with the story of a persecuted people fleeing, then wandering and finally arriving at the promised land. Life expectancy is short a

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the rates of malnutrition and illiteracy in Chalatenango have always been among the highest in Latin America. The descendants of the Chortis Indians do without electricity even though hydroelectric power is exported from plants less than ten miles from their homes. Two years of civil war have ravaged the province. Entire adobe villages cradled by the deforested sierras lie abandoned, wild grass covering the tangled ruins of red-tile roofs. Other hamlets have been reduced to ashes but are still inhabited by a few stubborn peasants who say army troops and paramilitary bands burned down their homes, killed their chickens and pigs, and stole their beans and corn in repeated "invasions."

Chalatenango. The very word has come to represent to many Salvadoran leftists their "prolonged popular war" to topple the military-dominated regime. In the 1960s and 1970s, activist priests and nuns, following the liberationist doctrines of the Second Vatican Council and the Medellin Latin American Bishops Conference, began organizing thousands of peasants throughout the province into "base communities." At celebrations of the word, Church workers, including American Maryknoll nuns Ita Ford and Maura Clarke, who were murdered in 1980, instructed peasants not to accept meekly their subsistence-level lives. The Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants (FECCAS) and the Union of Field Workers (U.T.C.), which worked with the People's Church and the base communities, won large followings by organizing rural laborers. Increasing repression of the Church and its affiliated unions further radicalized the U.T.C. and FECCAS and opened the way for cooperation with the Marxist-led Popular Liberation Forces (F.P.L.) in 1977.

Five years later, the F.P.L. loosely controls one half of Chalatenango and the war continues to escalate. As the most radical and single-minded of the three largest Salvadoran guerrilla groups in the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (F.M.L.N.), the F.P.L. has made the rugged, mountainous terrain of Chalatenango its primary base of operations in this poor and deeply religious region of Latin America.

Throughout the guerrilla-held territory in Chalatenango, thousands of peasants are organized in cooperatives that function alongside popularly elected local and "zonal" governments under the ideological guidance of the F.P.L.'s Marxist-Leninist political arm. The cooperatives, most of which were started as Catholic base communities, are essentially war machines: their members produce food, sew uniforms and dig mazes of bomb shelters and trenches for the revolutionary forces. But the communities also provide the guerrillas with a valuable esprit de corps. Cooking, eating and working are communal activities, which somehow seems to soften the hardships.

"Part of our strategy is to control more and more territory and organize more and more people," Comandante Salvador Guerra, a 31-year-old member of the F.P.L. guerrilla high command, told me. "This is as much to win the war as it is to organize a revolutionary government that represents the interests of the people. Our people administer their own power; economic production, agriculture, housing reconstruction, health and education are seen to with whatever resources are available." Guerra, like many F.P.L. leaders, was the kind of parochial school student who delights his priest. He won high marks in primary and secondary Catholic schools and prayed seven times a day. He applied to Catholic Seminary in San Salvador to enter the priesthood but never attended because his family could not afford the tuition. At 19, Guerra joined the F.P.L. guerrillas, becoming an original member of an organization that split from the Salvadoran Communist Party. Sitting behind his desk in an adobe office in the village of La Laguna, the stocky, soft-spoken commander lectured me for more than an hour on the morality of the guerrilla struggle. Before turning to violence, he said, the Salvadoran left tried every lawful and nonviolent strategy to advance its demands, only to be blocked by fraudulent elections and shot down in the streets. Guerra, who wore the Soviet-style F.P.L. flag on the sleeve of his fatigues, is no longer a practicing Christian, but he expressed a respect for religion that even a priest would admire. "It is phenomenal that all our people are Christian and believe in the values of equality before God. We have our own history and that includes the religious tradition of our people. We are not going to throw that tradition off."

The People's Church is one of several underlying causes of the Salvadoran revolution. Fifty years of military rule following the 1932 peasant revolt frustrated all attempts at reform that threatened the interests of the tiny landed aristocracy. An economic boom based on cheap labor, economic integration among Central American countries and foreign investment generated wealth and new industries in the 1950s and 1960s. But it also created teeming urban slums and left the vast majority in wretched poverty. Meanwhile, the population in the rural areas was increasing so rapidly that the peasants could not produce an adequate supply of food. Finally, brutal military repression radicalized many whose relatives and friends had been killed. But it was the People's Church that first organized peasants into the communities that would provide Mao's "sea" for the guerrillas to swim in. The People's Church instilled in thousands of peasants a belief in the right to an education, the right to be paid a decent wage for an honest day's work and the right to medical care.

For the ordinary F.P.L. guerrilla, liberationist Catholicism is a source of inspiration. "The Bible says man should love his fellow man. We are putting that lesson into practice as Marxist-Leninists," said a 23-year-old guerrilla named Marcos, who regularly attends celebration of the word services. "We are going to create a new society, a clean society full of love, whatever it costs." Christian inspiration seemed equally important for Raul, the 33-year-old F.P.L. political party chief for Chalatenango and the adjacent province of Cabañas, as he reminisced about one of his most successful combat missions. "Three years ago two comrades and I commandeered a taxi in San Salvador as part of an operation to attack the university police. We turned on the radio and Monsignor Romero, our archbishop, was speaking. He

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said Christianity permits people to overthrow tyranny. He was justifying our mission. That calmed me and reinforced my will to fight. Marxist-Leninists can learn from Christian human values."

San Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero spoke softly but with the most convincing voice in El Salvador. His assassination by ultrarightists in 1980 was linked to Roberto d'Aubuisson, now president of the constituent assembly, by former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White. Romero sealed his fate during a March 1980 homily. In an appeal to the army, the national guard and the police, the Archbishop said, "No soldier is obliged to obey an order contrary to the law of God. It is time that you came to your senses and obeyed your conscience rather than follow out a sinful command. . . . I beseech you, I beg you, I order you in the name of God, stop the repression!" A day later, just as he completed the words of the eucharist during a memorial mass, he was shot in the heart. "He who defends the poor can be crucified at any time," said Sister Rosa, a 47-year-old Salvadoran nun who has taken a *nom de guerre* for safety, as she leafed through a book containing the photographs of thirteen nuns and priests who have been killed in El Salvador since 1977 because of their politics.

It took three days for me and an armed escort to backpack through guerrilla territory, from La Laguna to Patanera, in order to meet Sister Rosa and discuss her pioneering work in bringing education to the backwoods of Chalatenango. I found her sewing and chatting with peasant women on the porch of her one-room adobe house, a short run from the nearest trenches. She was eager to talk about the cooperatives flourishing in Chalatenango. "The early Christians lived in communities like ours. One helped the other. Like in socialism. It is clear from Saint Paul what kind of community they had. Our base communities put into practice mutual help like in the days of the early Christians. If I love God, I have to love my brother." Sister Rosa interrupted the interview because a prematurely-born infant was dying and her mother requested an emergency baptism. "In this country such a child could live if it had a rich family who could afford the necessary hospital care, an incubator," she told me later. "But here such a poor child dies. In your country it is different. A man who earns a minimum wage can afford housing and a refrigerator. Here the poor live in misery and there is no way out."

The majority in the Salvadoran Church hierarchy do not agree with Sister Rosa's views. Cautious criticism of the status quo seems to most bishops a safer course than alliance with guerrillas whose ideology has historically clashed with religion. But it is not Marxism that attracts Sister Rosa and other Church activists to the revolutionary cause. Liberation theology calls on the Church to join with the poor to create a more just and Christian society in which human rights would be respected and social privilege discarded. Sister Rosa said the Church must work with the revolution or risk becoming obsolete. She does not find the contradictions arising from a Christian-Marxist relationship threatening, although she conceded that clashes between the state and church establishments would be likely should the guerrillas ultimately take power.

Sister Rosa coordinates the rebel educational system in the eastern third of Chalatenango. There are 250 students in the five schools under her direction in Zone One of the Apolinario Serrano Front (named after a murdered Catholic peasant organizer who was illiterate). Parents I spoke with in several villages praised the classes, saying they provided their children with opportunities they never had. Three classes for adults have also been started.

From La Laguna it was only a short hike to the village of El Jicaro, where I was able to see revolutionary education in action. Mireira, the 19-year-old teacher, wore a lime chiffon dress and black army boots. She began the class with two questions.

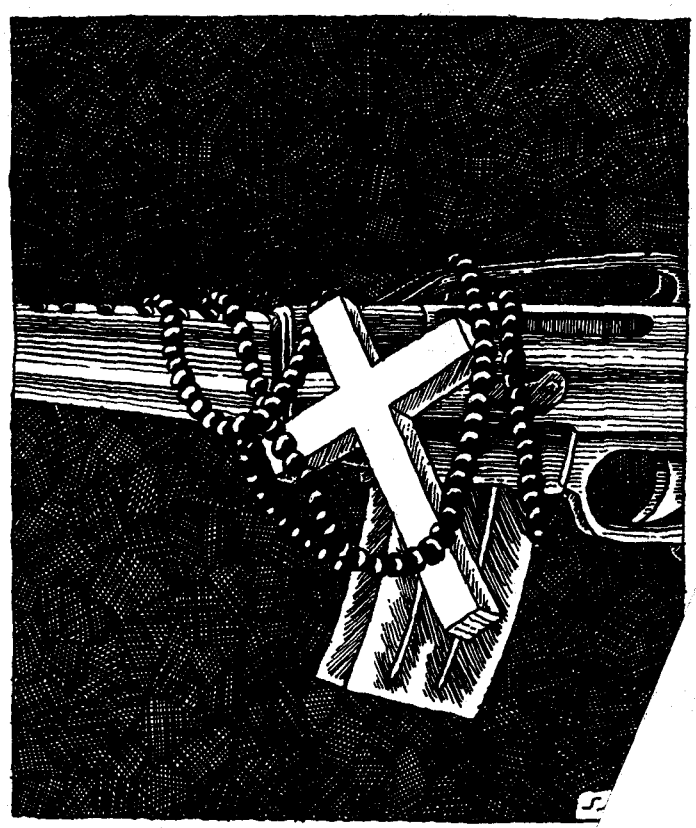
"Are you all going to be the militiamen and guerrillas of the future?"

"Yes," cried the forty students, who ranged in age from 5 to 12.

"And are you going to fight the enemy?"

"Yes," was the unanimous response.

Following a spirited, though cacophonous, rendition of the Popular Liberation Forces' hymn, Mireira wrote on the blackboard: "My mother takes part in the war" and "Father, mother and I work in the home as a collective." The older children dutifully read aloud, many smiling with pride at their accomplishment. After ninety minutes of rigorous reading and writing drills, the students filed off the porch of the abandoned adobe house that serves as a school for what amounted to recess: war games. In a forest behind the school, the boys and girls giggled and screamed through ambush drills, taking positions behind rocks and brandishing toy rifles.



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Grass-roots support, not foreign intervention, is the heart of any successful guerrilla war, and the war in El Salvador is no exception. Thousands of peasants throughout Chalatenango line up at dawn and dusk for the raising and lowering of the F.P.L. flag. After singing the F.P.L. hymn, there is the obligatory chanting of slogans: "Revolution or death," "Down with the Yanqui invader," "If Nicaragua won, El Salvador will win." Only one was particularly original—"Comandante, there only is one: Marcial." "Marcial" is the *nom de guerre* of Salvador Cayetano Carpio, 62, who is known as the "Ho Chi Minh of Central America." The son of a shoemaker, Marcial was orphaned as a boy and grew up under the care of nuns. He abandoned his studies at a seminary to become a labor organizer, and he eventually joined the Salvadoran Communist Party. He was named secretary general of the party in the late 1960s, but he left the organization in 1970 to found the F.P.L. Marcial concluded that working to reform the political system was pointless without a military capability, an armed guerrilla force. For the next five years he groomed an urban revolutionary movement in El Salvador's major cities before taking the struggle to the provinces of Santa Ana, San Vicente, San Miguel, Cabañas, Cuscatlan, San Salvador, La Unión and Chalatenango. From the beginning of their struggle, Marcial and other Popular Liberation Forces leaders, who saw the base communities as an expression of rural discontent, worked with Church activists through the F.P.L.-linked Popular Revolutionary Bloc, an organization that incorporated Christian union groups like FECCAS and the U.T.C.

But the F.P.L.'s military hold over most villages in the area is loose. Since the guerrillas won control of La Laguna in February 1981, the village has been "invaded" in June, October and March 1982 by government forces who burned down the school and church and stole food supplies. After each invasion, the guerrillas and the cooperative leaders led the residents out of the village, returning a few days later to rebuild. Claps of mortar fire and the whirring of U.S.-leased helicopters are common sounds in La Laguna, but the 250 inhabitants hardly notice; war has become part of their lives. Women spend their days pressing tortillas with stones, sewing uniforms, digging ditches and washing clothes. Men carrying pistols work the fields, taking particular care of the tomatoes, cabbages and garlic the cooperative planted for the first time last year. After a beans and tortilla breakfast, two dozen guerrillas walk in single file along the winding footpaths out of the village for training and exercise sessions. Following two hours of drills on a deforested mountaintop, the guerrillas take the afternoon off. Many spend the time oiling their M-16 or G-3 assault rifles or reading Marcial's ubiquitous pamphlet "El Salvador: The Prolonged Popular War." By early evening, most of the guerrillas and their supporters stretch out in hammocks or on dirt floors to sleep, unprotected from annoying fleas. Tomorrow, the "prolonged popular war" will go on. □

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AGENTS PROTECTION ACT

A Constitutional Disaster

HERMAN SCHWARTZ

On June 23, the Intelligence Identities Protection Act became law, making it criminal to reveal the identities of covert agents if there is "reason to believe" that doing so could harm U.S. foreign intelligence activities. For the first time in our country's history, private citizens can be imprisoned for disclosing information lawfully obtained from publicly available sources. During the debate in the House, the bill's floor manager, Edward P. Boland, predicted: "The courts will have some fun looking at some of the proceedings of this House today and . . . at the specific language of the bill itself. . . . [It] lacks some clarity."

That's putting it mildly. Ambiguities pervade this statute. Even its sponsors aren't sure what has been made criminal. Moreover, the act's original objective could have been accomplished without trampling on the First Amendment—if there was any reason to accomplish it in the first place.

The targets of this legislation, according to its sponsors, are Philip Agee, Louis Wolf and others who, in an attempt to undermine covert activities by the Central Intelligence Agency, have exposed the identities of agents throughout the world in books and publications like *CounterSpy* and its successor, *Covert Action Information Bulletin.* The major difficulty faced by the act's supporters was how to draft legislation that would get Agee and Wolf without also penalizing *The New York Times* and other members of the mainstream press when they identify covert agents in investigative stories. Squaring this circle proved semantically difficult and politically impossible. The House and Senate conference therefore agreed on language that does in fact reach everyone, but issued a statement listing certain kinds of revelations that would be legal, such as in news stories of intelligence failures, in academic studies or by a private organization seeking to expel intelligence agents who have infiltrated it. The distinction is purportedly between "the business of 'naming names'" and ordinary journalism, between the "main direction" and a "mere side effect."

Not only is the distinction difficult to grasp and apply but it was promptly smudged. Hard-liners in the House like Henry Hyde managed to persuade key supporters of the bill to repudiate the explanatory statement as "not authoritative," "misleading," "not accurately reflect[ing Congress's] intent" and "inconsistent with the plain language of the bill"—which "plain language" is of course all-encompassing. In the Senate, John Chafee, the bill's lead sponsor, rejected an amendment making explicit the distinction between "main direction" and "side effect."

There is considerable doubt that the proposed distinction would have worked in practice. Are the writers and publishers of news stories whose sole purpose is to reveal that Jordan's King Hussein is on the C.I.A. payroll punishable? What about the authors of a report that certain covert agents are involved in corruption in Korea? That C.I.A. agents plotted assassinations? Even the Justice Department—which supports the legislation—is unsure. Lawyers say they are baffled about what advice to give their press clients.

The truth is that many proponents of the bill, like Chafee and Barry Goldwater, don't believe in the distinction. They don't think *anyone* should be able to identify covert agents, for *any* purpose. "I'm not sure that *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* has the right to expose names of agents any more than Mr. Wolf or Mr. Agee," Chafee burst out at one point in the debate. Goldwater declared: "If someone wants to criticize foreign policy . . . or write about the lousy conduct of some of our citizens, that is O.K. But they do not have to name names, because that places the lives of human beings in danger."

Ultimately, the sponsors conceded, a jury must decide the reporter's guilt or innocence with little or no help from the statute or the judge. This, of course, makes for uncertainty and unpredictability, especially since guilt can be established simply by showing the probable consequences of the defendant's actions, regardless of what was actually intended. Unpopular defendants—and the media are hardly public favorites—will almost always lose. Cautious media lawyers will advise their clients not to publish and, absent an ideological commitment or a very deep pocket, most won't.

The sweep of this legislation also gives prosecutors much more power to harass a bothersome press, to thwart or-

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dinary newsgathering. A Justice Department spokesman acknowledged as much, but said, in effect, "Trust us."

If there is a case for such legislation, it is that the kinds of revelations made by Philip Agee and Louis Wolf are something other than speech. They can be considered a form of counter-espionage engaged in with the clear purpose of destroying the effectiveness of the agent identified. To reach this type of activity—and only this type—the Senate Judiciary Committee and the House Select Committee on Intelligence limited the bill to those who *intend* to impair or impede intelligence activities. That is all the C.I.A. originally wanted, and the agency still finds this approach acceptable. Such a law also has serious constitutional defects, but there is some precedent for it.

On the floors of the House and the Senate, however, the late Representative John Ashbrook and Senator Chafee introduced amendments that replaced "intent" with mere "reason to believe" that harm would result. The purpose of the disclosure thus becomes irrelevant. A jury need only find—in hindsight, of course—that even if no harm resulted from the exposure or was indeed intended, there was some reason to expect harm. And a jury will always be able to find this. A reporter who prechecks a story with the C.I.A., for example, will always be warned that his revelations could be harmful, and this evidence alone would be enough to satisfy most juries. In fact, Chafee asserted during the debate that Congress has "made a generic finding that the disclosure of *any* covert agent's status is harmful"; he also declared that "any reasonable person would know that by naming names you are going to impair the foreign intelligence activities of the United States."

This "reason to believe" language is also found in the law against bribery overseas by U.S. businesses. That statute has drawn heavy fire from the business community, which claims to be uncertain how to comply with its provisions. Three weeks before it took up the agents bill last February, the Senate responded by unanimously voting to excise the offending language. The bill was sponsored by John Chafee. But the anti-bribery law affects business, whereas the Intelligence Act affects the First Amendment.

The Intelligence Identities Protection Act marks the first time Congress has dispensed with an intent requirement in a criminal statute where speech is concerned. In many other situations (such as the proposed Federal Criminal Code), the Justice Department has acknowledged the need for proof of a specific intent to harm. As Prof. Philip Kurland of the University of Chicago—hardly a flaming radical—wrote, "I cannot see how a law that inhibits the publication, without malicious intent, of information that is in the public domain and previously published can be valid"; this view is shared by 140 other law professors who signed a statement embodying it. Even the C.I.A. agrees.

In the end, the task of drawing these distinctions is probably impossible. Separating primary and secondary purposes has always perplexed judges and juries in criminal cases. In conventional criminal cases, the matter is usually satisfactorily left to the jury. But in speech cases, the uncertainty and unpredictability that inevitably accompany leaving the final decision to a jury will have a chilling effect on free speech. This is one reason that the Justice Department originally opposed all efforts to punish disclosures of publicly available information by private citizens.

The Philip Agees and Louis Wolfs of the world really have little effect on intelligence activities. The impetus for the Intelligence Identities Protection Act came from the 1975 assassination of Richard S. Welch, the C.I.A. station chief in Athens who was identified as an agent by *Counter-Spy* and other publications years before the killing. Welch's identity was also no secret in Greece. For sixteen years the C.I.A. station head's house in an Athens suburb was widely known; Greek guides would point it out to tourists. C.I.A. headquarters had warned Welch that it was dangerous for him to live there, but he chose to ignore the warnings. These facts have not, of course, prevented the C.I.A. or the politicians from invoking Welch's assassination as proof of the need to protect agents' identities—"dancing on Welch's coffin," as Senator Philip Hart once put it. The exposure of Welch points up the real problem, however: the C.I.A. has done little to protect its agents operating under diplomatic or other "light cover." (And Agee and Wolf haven't tried to expose the truly clandestine operatives.) In acknowledgment of that, the act requires the President to report annually on measures he has taken to safeguard such agents. Unfortunately, Congress didn't stop there.

The Intelligence Identities Protection Act is a legislative mess and a constitutional catastrophe. The combination of pervasive ambiguities and heavy penalties will give it the chilling effect of a Russian winter. It will be hard to challenge, however. If Agee or Wolf test the law, the odds are they will lose. An adverse decision would probably be accompanied by sweeping anti-First Amendment rhetoric by someone like Justice William Rehnquist.

Who will challenge it, then? The establishment media? That is unlikely. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* or CBS have little incentive to take the risk of a conservative Supreme Court making a broad construction of the statute, and, for a while at least, the government probably won't go after them even if they do expose covert agents. That leaves a large and varied group of media, writers and scholars, few of whom have either the cash or the commitment to risk a three-year jail term, a $15,000 fine and heavy legal costs. If those risks can be sufficiently reduced—and certain legal strategies may make that possible—then this group is best positioned for a challenge. Even then the chances of a favorable outcome are not good. For regardless of how little a danger Agee, Wolf and company really do pose to the lives of American agents abroad, the rhetoric of safety, which blew away all opposition to the bill and produced lopsided votes of 81 to 4 and 315 to 32, will overcome many constitutional infirmities.

The Intelligence Identities Protection Act seems to be the beginning of a major effort to prohibit the publication of "dangerous information" that, though publicly and lawfully available, the government doesn't want released. The new executive order on classified information and the Administra-

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tion's attempts to control scientific information are other examples. With the present Supreme Court, which is inclined to rubber-stamp everything put forward in the name of national security, the future of the First Amendment is not encouraging. □

G.M. CONTRACT BLUES

Ill at Ease In Lordstown

JOHN RUSSO

Although the controversy surrounding the contract negotiations between the United Automobile Workers and General Motors last March has faded from public view, there is a simmering resentment among the rank and file at the concessions their officers made. This anger has already boiled over in union elections, and it hangs ominously over the recently reopened local-level contract talks.

Nowhere has the impact of this resentment been more evident than at the Lordstown, Ohio, plant, which in the past has been a case study in worker disaffection. In a May 24 run-off election at the plant, Martin (Whitey) Ford, the popular, seemingly unbeatable president of U.A.W. Local 1112 (G.M.A.D.), was defeated in his bid for a fourth term. Ford's victorious opponent was Rudy Gasparek, a former vice president of the local who had not run for office in more than a decade. Gasparek's most effective campaign issue was Ford's involvement in last year's contract talks as a member of the negotiating committee and his subsequent defense of the concessions. Although Ford's election to the bargaining committee was a source of pride within the local, his participation in what many local auto workers characterized as a "sellout" became the source of his defeat.

Throughout the negotiation and ratification process, dissident members of Local 1112 and its counterpart, Local 1714 (Fisher Body), led the opposition to the concessions. In addition to organizing both local and national protests, dissident leaders from Lordstown appeared on Canadian television in January to explain their views. Many Canadian auto workers were critical of the concessions, and there were calls for secession from the U.A.W. In a recent article in the *Automotive News*, U.A.W. vice president Robert White, director of the Canadian region, was quoted as suggesting that withdrawal was a real possibility. Thus, the American auto workers' appearance on Canadian TV exacerbated the problem and could not have come at a worse time for the international union. The international's chagrin grew when Ford came home with the tentative agreement in March and was greeted by pickets outside the union hall. Films of the auto workers picketing their own local headquarters were shown on national television, to the acute embarrassment of Ford and officials of the international. Following the ratification vote, U.A.W. president Douglas Fraser observed ruefully in a speech to the Cleveland City Club, "Lordstown—I just want to forget about the place." (He later apologized for the remark.)

In defending the new agreement, Ford said that the concessions were necessary and that the contract did contain substantive gains. But his arguments, like those of the U.A.W. leadership, were not very convincing. Most of those opposed to the concessions felt that G.M. was shedding crocodile tears in its pleas of financial hardship. The company's claim that it was in a bad way was used to justify its demands for a less adversarial, more cooperative relationship with the union and for major contractual concessions.

By the time Lordstown workers voted on the new contract, rank-and-file support for the critics of the concessions (whose numbers included many members of the executive council) was so widespread that the outcome was never in

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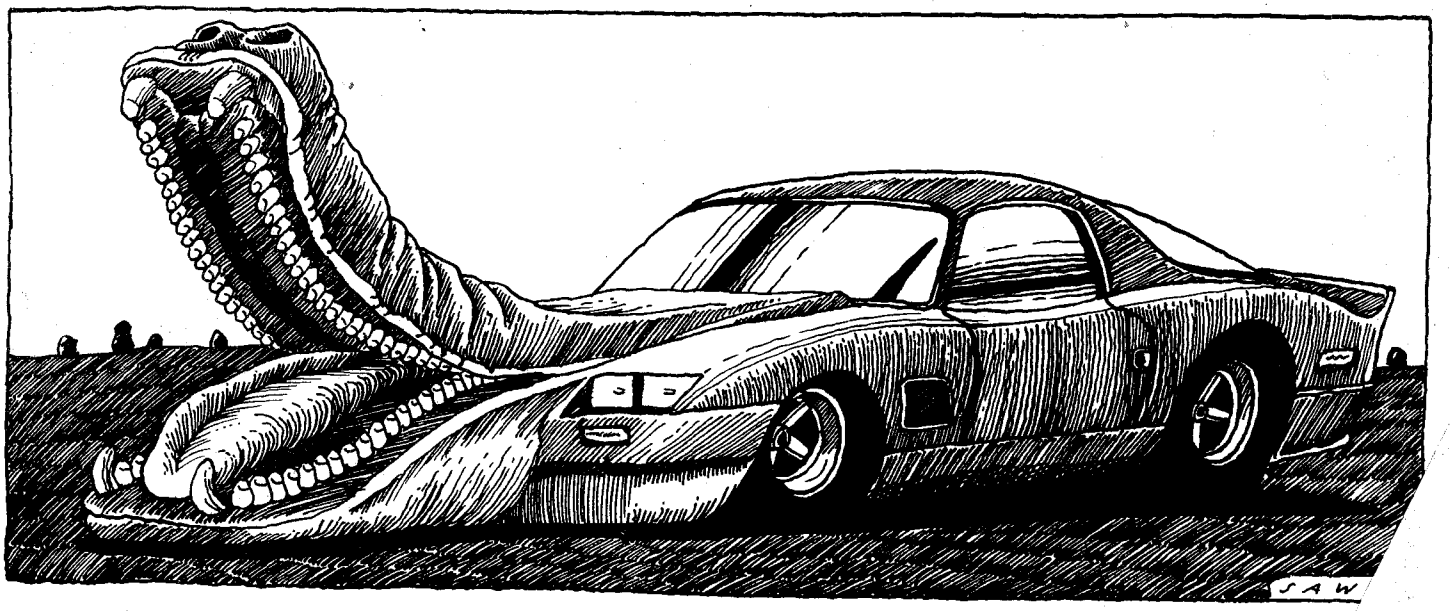

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doubt. Ultimately, Local 1112 voted the contract down by almost a 4-to-1 margin, and Local 1714 rejected it by a 6-to-1 margin. To Ford the loss was a personal defeat, and it set the stage for his ouster from the presidency.

"Concessions are not themselves evidence of betrayal," Stanley Aronowitz wrote in a letter to *The Nation* May 15, but the workers at Lordstown clearly perceived them as such. After the contract was narrowly ratified nationwide, the opposition within both 1112 and 1714 called upon other locals to assemble in Youngstown, Ohio, for a discussion of the implications of the concessions and to plan strategy for the upcoming local negotiations. Two meetings were held in April and May with about seventy representatives in attendance at each. U.A.W. national headquarters promptly condemned the rump meetings as "unauthorized."

But G.M. had already seized the initiative by calling for the local negotiations to get under way. It soon emerged that the company's demands at each local bargaining unit were strikingly similar. This uniformity suggested a coordinated national strategy of bypassing local-level negotiations. Moreover, a provision in the new national contract specified that any issues unresolved after sixty days of talks should be decided at the national level. This provision, union negotiators felt, weakened their hand and gave their management counterparts a license to stall. Issues that had urgent relevance at the local level would be "kicked upstairs" and handled by the U.A.W. leadership and top management in Detroit. Given their leadership's predisposition to make concessions, the rank and file have little confidence that their interests will be vigorously pushed. There the matter stands. The locals have agreed informally to keep one another informed about the status of their negotiations, which will continue until July 3.

The local election at Lordstown gave the workers an outlet for their frustrations. The politics of Lordstown elections are highly sophisticated, and over the years Ford had proven a durable and skillful operator. Although some local members disagreed with his pragmatic style of leadership (he worked closely with Lyle Williams, a conservative Republican Congressman, for example), most recognized his skill in handling local issues and tolerated his excursions into *Realpolitik*. But they could not forgive him for his support of the national agreement.

Ford was not the only casualty at Lordstown. In an odd coincidence, another Ford, Gary, a candidate for financial secretary, who is not related to Whitey, was also beaten. Gary Ford had been an outspoken opponent of the concessions, but had suddenly supported Whitey Ford in the runoff election. Many in Local 1112 believe that his defeat was the result of his last-minute support of the incumbent. Clearly, resentment was running deep at Lordstown.

The day after the elections, *The New York Times* carried a story about Lordstown entitled "Time and Bad Times Alter Blue Collar Blues." In it labor reporter William Serrin wrote, "Today, much has changed at the G.M. assembly plant here, not least of which is the militancy of its workers."

Nothing could be further from the truth. The fight against concessions, the defeat of a previously popular president who many workers think betrayed them and the near wildcat strike last summer over changes in production show that the auto workers at Lordstown, like many others, are as militant as they ever were. The outcome of local negotiations at Lordstown is by no means a foregone conclusion. □

THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR

Khomeini and Saddam Hussein: One Must Go

MANSOUR FARHANG

The Iran-Iraq war, the biggest, the longest, the costliest and seemingly the most absurd military conflict in the modern Middle East's history, is coming to an end. Khomeini's strategy of transforming Iran's resistance against the Iraqi invaders into a holy war was successful because it combined the country's nationalistic spirit with its passionate Shiite faith. Early this year, following victories near Dizful, a city in western Iran, Iranian officials began to be explicit about what they had previously only implied, namely that they could not ignore developments in Iraq. President Ali Khamenei, for example, declared that "any victory brings us nearer to our goal, which is to export the revolution." He also proclaimed that "Imam Khomeini knows no geographic frontiers."

Months before Iranian forces captured the port city of Khurramshahr, revolutionary guards fighting the Iraqis in Khuzistan province put up highway signs indicating the number of miles to Karbala, the sacred Shiite city in southern Iraq. The final military operation to drive the Iraqis out of Iran was code-named *tariq al-Quds*, or the road to Jerusalem. Nonetheless, the recent statements by Iranian officials that Iran does not intend to cross the border into Iraq were an accurate reflection of Khomeini's intentions. This does not mean, however, that he is willing to make peace with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Khomeini has called for the fall of Saddam Hussein and the rise of a Shiite fundamentalist movement in Iraq. He also believes that he is widely admired among the masses of the Moslem world. During his four years in power, Khomeini has alternated between a crusading and a pragmatic path. As a crusader, he defies all rational calculation of costs or consequences; as a pragmatist, he pays close attention to the limits of what can be done in a given situation.

The Iranian leader is aware of the historic discrimination against the Iraqi Shiites, who make up more than half of

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their country's population, and he believes their discontent makes them susceptible to his message as well as to his absolute leadership. The ruling Baathist Party in Iraq has understood Khomeini's designs from the beginning of the Iranian revolution. Immediately after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Saddam Hussein mercilessly suppressed the Ayatollah's supporters in Iraq, particularly the members of an organization known as *Al Da'wa* (the Call). The original leader of this group, Ayatollah Muhammad Baqer Sadr, was executed two years ago. During the early months of the war with Iraq, Khomeini repeatedly called on Iraqi Shiites to rise up against their rulers, but no rebellion materialized.

At the outset, the Iranian revolution was very popular among Moslems because it promised to fulfill a historic dream, the establishment of a humane and equitable Islamic society. But when the Islamic Republic turned out to be one of the most repressive and totalitarian regimes in the history of the Middle East, disillusionment quickly set in. For example, the Iraqi Kurds had hoped that the fall of the Shah, who betrayed them in 1975, would mean that Iran would aid them in their resistance against Baathist oppression. But after witnessing Khomeini's brutal treatment of the prorevolutionary Iranian Kurds, including the napalming of their villages, they lost all faith in *Al Da'wa*'s rhetoric.

Now that the Baathists have established firm control over the Iraqi army, it is hard to imagine a serious threat to the party from opposition groups. Moreover, the Baath Party is dominated by Sunni Moslems, and Saddam Hussein's overthrow at their hands would give little satisfaction to Khomeini the Shiite crusader. The pragmatist in him might welcome the result, however. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein would accomplish the Ayatollah's proclaimed objective: the Iraqi President's death or arrest and trial. He might, of course, flee the country, but Saddam Hussein's pride would probably make him reject such a move as unbecoming.

On June 10, the Baathist Revolutionary Command Council issued a communiqué proposing the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Iran. The council deliberately gave the impression that Saddam Hussein opposed the offer. The hope was that, couched in this way, the proposal would be more appealing to Khomeini. It is not known if Saddam Hussein actually was ousted or if he was sufficiently confident of his power to engage in such an uncharacteristic ploy. The evidence supports the latter theory.

Iran's rejection of the cease-fire proposal demonstrated once again that Khomeini will not be satisfied with anything less than Saddam Hussein's fall as his price for a cessation of hostilities. However, if Iraq withdrew the remainder of its troops from Iranian soil and observed a unilateral cease-fire, a state resembling neither war nor peace and marked by sporadic violence could develop along the border. Khomeini the pragmatist knows that if he ordered his men into Iraq, the Jordanians, the Saudis and very likely the Egyptians would enter the war on the side of Iraq. Under those circumstances, even Syria would have to end its alliance with Iran. And so there will be no settlement so long as both Saddam Hussein and Khomeini are in power. One or the other of them must go before there can be peace between the two countries.

Iran's alliance with Syria is based on a mutual hostility toward Saddam Hussein. Beyond this common ground, however, their objectives diverge. The Iranian regime sees the alliance as a way of spreading the Islamic revolution, while the secular Baathists in Syria limit their description of revolutionary Iran's virtues to its anti-Zionism and anti-Americanism. Khomeini wishes to replace the Baathist regime with a theocracy; Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, who is himself plagued by a fundamentalist movement at home, hopes that a sympathetic faction of Iraqi Baathists will come to power. The man Khomeini has chosen to succeed Saddam Hussein is Hojatolislam Baqer Hakim, whose father was a Grand Ayatollah in Iraq a decade ago. Hafez al-Assad's candidate for the job is Brigadier Hassan Mustafa al-Naqib, a former Iraqi ambassador to Sweden who defected to Syria in 1978.

The pragmatic side of Khomeini thus tells him to wait for Saddam Hussein to be overthrown by forces within Iraq. Iran's war of words against the "Baathist unbelievers" will continue, however, as a device for maintaining national unity against a common enemy and for exploiting the fears of the oil-rich Arab states and pressuring them to pay huge reparations on Baghdad's behalf. Saudi Arabia has already made a "sincere and generous offer" of $25 billion in reparations, but Iran considers this inadequate. On June 4, Iranian President Ali Khamenei announced at a prayer rally that Iran wanted $150 billion from Iraq as one of its two conditions for ending the war, the other being, of course, the trial of President Saddam Hussein.

Similarly, Iran's offer to send troops into Lebanon on the side of the Palestine Liberation Organization should also be seen in the light of Khomeini's strategy of frightening the Arabs and maintaining a state of war at home. It is a propaganda gesture, for the idea of large numbers of Iranians fighting the Israelis in Lebanon is, at present, militarily absurd.

As for U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf, it has largely been exploitive and reactive. During the twenty months that Iranian territory was occupied by Iraq, the United States maintained its "neutrality." Once the Iraqi forces were pushed out, Secretary of State Alexander Haig rushed to explain that neutrality "does not mean that we are indifferent to the outcome. We have friends and interests that are endangered by the continuation of hostilities. We are committed to defending our vital interests in the area."

Now the lessons of history are coming back to haunt the United States. For a decade, it worked to make Iran the dominant power in the Persian Gulf. Ironically, now that Iran is no longer "an island of stability" in the region, President Nixon's goal of a feared Iran has become a reality. What the sale of $20 billion worth of arms to the Shah could not accomplish, the Iraqi invasion did. Advanced weapons were not enough to make Iran feared by Arab leaders, who could also buy weapons. The arousal of messianic nation-

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alism, however temporary and elusive, has been more effective in frightening the rich, unpopular and despotic Arab rulers.

Both the royalist nationalism of the Shah and the messianic variety expounded by Khomeini are compatible with the imperialist structures of world politics and the superpower rivalry in the Gulf. The Shah attempted to revive the pre-Islamic tradition of Iran; Khomeini has been more inventive but equally reactionary. The Shah claimed to be the creator of a "Great Civilization"; Khomeini promises to lead his followers to heaven. The Shah went so far as to change the Iranian calendar and celebrate the 2,500th anniversary of his kingdom; for Khomeini, all history is limited to his own version of Islam and Shiism. The Shah imagined the past and remembered the future; Khomeini suffers from the same kind of hallucination.

The differences between the two men are obvious but revealing. The Shah's quarter-century of pseudo-modernization and blind Westernization as an "unconditional ally" of the United States produced Khomeini's blend of reactionary fundamentalism, fervent nationalism and xenophobia. The Shah began his kingly business after World War II with the blessings of the Allied powers then occupying Iran, while Khomeini started his crusade with popular revolutionary legitimacy. The Shah was often a pawn in the games of his friends; Khomeini is the beneficiary of his enemies' confusion and ill-conceived actions. This is not to deny the Ayatollah's "dark genius" as a leader. But even the most masterful pragmatic crusader needs opportunities to practice his art. The admission of the Shah to the United States, the fiasco of the attempted rescue of the American hostages and the Iraqi invasion of Iran must be regarded as the three acts that enabled Khomeini to consolidate his power as well as publicize his message. If the hostage crisis was the gift of the "Great Satan" to Khomeini the pragmatist, the Iraqi invasion of Iran, to use his own words again, was "God's mercy" to Khomeini the crusader. □

Solidarity

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

traumatic experiences for the "victims." Those days are gone, at least in the advanced capitalist countries. No one in these nations, not even the party faithful, still believes that the Soviet Union is constructing an alternative society that offers answers to any other country's social problems. Sacrilege has vanished along with the notion of paradise.

But Communists outside the Soviet bloc have not entirely lost their capacity for disillusionment, and so the events in Poland shook the rank and file for a number of reasons. The early progress of Solidarity had raised hopes of a gradual transition to a different kind of regime. It was so obviously a mass movement of the Polish working class that it was impossible to dismiss it as bourgeois or as manipulated from abroad. The military dictatorship, on the other hand, was clearly acting in complicity with the Soviet Union. Jaruzelski's coup thus contributed to the further disintegration of the international movement dominated by the Russians.

The Soviet leadership attempted to conceal the cracks in the monolith from the Russian people by a kind of numbers game. Statements from a host of small but obedient parties in Latin America and the Arab world approving Jaruzelski's actions were quoted in the Soviet press. The parties on the Asian continent, where memories of the Sino-Soviet split are still vivid, were not so cooperative; even the Japanese Communists refused to cooperate. And in Western Europe the reactions were overwhelmingly negative. The coup was condemned in unequivocal terms by a large contingent of Eurocommunists headed by the Italians but including the Spaniards, the Dutch, the British, the Belgians and all the Scandinavians with the exception of the Danes, now a tiny sect as a result of a recent split in their ranks.

The Kremlin can count minor parties in its numbers game, but spreading the word that Communists in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg are solidly behind the Soviet Union is mainly a tactic for confusing the issue. Moscow knows very well that in Western Europe it can rely on only three parties that matter. These are the larger of the two Greek parties (known as the Exterior), which has always toed the Moscow line; the equally obedient Portuguese C.P., whose leader, Álvaro Cunhal, visited Warsaw at the beginning of April; and, last but not least, the maverick French party of Georges Marchais, which is a separate case.

The French C.P. used to be one of the most Stalinist of the lot. Khrushchev's "secret" indictment of Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 was referred to by French Communists as the "report attributed to comrade Khrushchev" as a way to avoid admitting the bitter truth. Subsequently, however, their popular front strategy compelled them to change their line. They could not claim to be democratic and hope to gain the support of the electorate if they seemed to approve repression in the Soviet bloc, so they distanced themselves from Moscow. But after their break with the Socialist Party in 1977 and 1978, the French Communists were no longer interested in wooing voters on the left, and they moved closer to the Soviet line. The blessing that Marchais gave to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan was a spectacular illustration of this shift. The C.P. paid a heavy price for its ideological antics and lost about a quarter of its usual vote in the 1981 presidential elections. After its poor showing, the party climbed aboard the Mitterrand bandwagon on domestic issues, though it has not altered its foreign policy. Thus, although the Socialists expressed their support for Solidarity, the Communists backed Jaruzelski, and this, they themselves admit, cost them additional votes in the local elections last March. At times the bewildered Communist leadership seems to be guided solely by a political death wish.

To be sure, the anti-Moscow Communists are also in

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disarray. The Spanish Communists are undergoing a crisis of major proportions. Party leader Santiago Carrillo has had to contend not only with a pro-Soviet faction, the so-called "Afghans," who are strong in Barcelona, but with the Basques, who oppose his centralism, and with the Eurocommunists, who accuse him of having insufficient reformist zeal and of preaching rather than practicing democracy. Carrillo predictably condemned the Polish coup, but his stand did not carry as much weight as it would have in the past because of the disunity within his own party's ranks.

In 1977, Eurocommunism probably reached its high-water mark. In March of that year Carrillo, Marchais and Enrico Berlinguer of Italy met in Madrid amid speculation of an impending break with Moscow and new policies. In the wake of the Polish crisis, Marchais had returned to the fold, Carrillo's authority was shaken and Berlinguer was left alone to lead the offensive. This the Italians did without pulling punches. The Eurocommunist critique was still largely within the bounds of Palmiro Togliatti's polycentrism, which held that the Soviet model was not appropriate for Western societies. Jaruzelski's coup drove Italian Communists to condemn the Soviet system and the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty for bloc countries, and to attack the Soviet leadership as well as its foreign policy. Incensed, the Russians denounced this as "sacrilege."

But their anathemas no longer carry the lethal sting that they had when Stalin was in power. The only protests within the Italian party against Berlinguer's policies came from Armando Cossutta, on the central committee, and *Interstampa*, a publication that invariably adheres to the Moscow line. The Russians quickly realized it was tactically stupid to fight the battle over Solidarity. They will bide their time and eventually criticize the leadership for being too soft on capitalist rule in Italy and on American imperialism elsewhere in the world.

The rejection of the Soviet Union as a model has always been the indispensable beginning of an independent Eurocommunism, but it is only a beginning. Independence from Moscow meant the Communist parties had to come up with social and economic policies of their own. After twenty-five years of relative prosperity under capitalism, the Eurocommunists decided to follow the social democratic way. But just as they were being converted to the system, the system went into a recession. This made Berlinguer's "historic compromise" an irrelevance, and Marchais is clearly leading his party into what has traditionally been referred to as the "dustbin of history." Only the Italian C.P. seems capable of pointing the way to the future, but its success will ultimately depend on its ability to formulate socialist solutions for the current economic crisis and to devise an anti-imperialist foreign policy that is not subservient to the Soviet Union. But these are the historical tasks facing all European Communists, and the entire Western left, for that matter.

Allies and Bedfellows

Last fall, tens of thousands of antinuclear protesters marched in the nations of Western Europe. They were particularly numerous in West Germany, Holland, Britain and Belgium. Their ranks were slightly thinner in Italy and much thinner in France. This wave of hope may soon sweep across Western Europe again.

Then, last December, there was another, sadder protest against the military rape of Poland. Here, the extent of participation was reversed: the left was prominent in France, slightly less so in Italy and conspicuously absent in the tiny demonstrations held in Britain, Belgium and Germany.

This does not mean, as it is fashionable here in Paris to suggest, that the antinuclear protesters are stooges of Moscow. It is perfectly natural that more people should be concerned by the prospects of nuclear holocaust than by the stifling of freedom in Poland. Yet the contrast was too glaring to take comfort in this explanation, and it cast a pall over the future of the antinuclear movement in Europe. Communists in Stalin's day could swallow all sorts of things without qualms of conscience because they viewed themselves as part of a huge army, aiding the battle for socialism on the crucial Russian front. Nuclear protesters are marching to an entirely different drummer. They are galvanized by a healthy revulsion and by moral indignation. They cannot afford to turn a blind eye to Soviet policies, domestic or foreign, that shock the conscience.

There are also pragmatic reasons for condemning Soviet repression in Eastern Europe. Although the European disarmament movement may be largely unilateral, it is gaining ground in America and must eventually spread to the Communist bloc. There, too, governments must ultimately be made to respond to pressure from below. This consideration makes the defeat of a democratic movement like Solidarity a blow to the entire antinuclear movement. Thus the bell that tolls for Solidarity tolls for the disarmament movement; we cannot put our heads in the sand and hope that Poland will go away.

A related problem is the temptation on the left to treat the enemies of our enemies as our friends. I encountered this attitude in Poland before Jaruzelski's coup among spokesmen for Solidarity who were reluctant to criticize American imperialism or Reagan's cold-war policies in El Salvador. I discovered it in the United States among left wingers who, having duly condemned the coup, were trying to push Poland into the background so as to be able "to get on with the job." Their reluctance to keep the moral heat on the Soviet Union may sometimes spring from the best of reasons—e.g., the belief that one should give priority to the fight against home-grown imperialism. Yet too many scandals have been ignored in the name of clearing out the weeds in our own garden. Another wave of political blindness to crimes perpetrated in the Soviet bloc would be neither forgiven nor forgivable.

Nor does an understandable distaste for our strange political bedfellows justify a mood of withdrawal. The love of the Reagans and the Thatchers for the Polish workers is nauseating. It is easy, however, to show up their hypocrisy for what it is. We need merely demand that Solidarity's conservative sympathizers follow its example and proclaim that

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all factories and offices should be run by the workers. It is not difficult to imagine the reactions to such a proposal on Wall Street or in corporate board rooms.

But there is a simpler reason that we cannot stand pure and aloof. Unfortunately, we are not yet numerous enough to win victories on our own. Virtue does not lie only in splendid isolation, or vice in sharing platforms or seeking allies. The slippery road begins when we conceal our principles in order to be accepted or worship alien gods to preserve an unholy alliance. To take a concrete example, during the Algerian struggle for independence, Washington had its own motives for hostility to French colonialism. The Algerians were certainly entitled to exploit these conflicts between the two allies. It would have been wrong, however, for them to sing the praises of American democracy and ignore the nature of U.S. imperialism. By the same token, the left cannot condemn American intervention in Vietnam and avert its eyes from Russian tanks in Prague.

Which brings us to the heart of the matter—the American left's reluctance to curse the two superpowers with equal vigor. Apparently, its conditioned reflexes are strong, for many people on the non-Communist left still seem to view Russia, however oppressive, as somehow socialist, and, however "bureaucratically degenerated," as a workers' state. To say that the United States and the Soviet Union both stink is not to equate the epitome of capitalism with the center of postrevolutionary oppression. It simply means that neither country can be described as the kind of society we are striving for. Whether the chances for a radical transformation are now greater on this side or on the other side of the great ideological divide between East and West, whether the hopes of building socialism are higher, say, in France and Italy than in Hungary and Poland, is open to question. But the events in Poland show that in a country where the means of production have been nationalized, a movement of revolt will rapidly raise the question of workers' control over property and power on the shop floor and in the nation at large, despite the understandable antisocialist prejudices of the ruling elite.

The Western left must back Solidarity for more than moral reasons; there are also pedagogical reasons for supporting it. For millions of people socialism in Warsaw or Budapest or Prague is now identified with Soviet tanks; it is being confused with the corrupt and oppressive powers that be. Ideally, we could break the bewildering identification of socialism with Brezhnevism by providing a genuine socialism as an alternative. At the bare minimum, we must prove to our potential partners that socialists side with the victimized workers and not with their jackbooted oppressors.

Fearful Symmetry

On each of the two occasions I returned to America this year, I pleaded the case that Solidarity and El Salvador were part of the same struggle. What I did not bargain for was the ease with which people in the United States confused communism with the Soviet Union or cited Jaruzelski's coup to discredit the very idea of a radical transformation of society. And this discrediting, after all, remains the main purpose of official propaganda on both sides of the ocean.

After the sudden uprising of workers and students in France in 1968 and the so-called "hot autumn" which followed in Italy, after the economic crisis that destroyed the myth of permanent prosperity and the rise of sporadic but numerous movements undermining capitalism's ideological domination, the establishment badly needed an argument to convince the rebels that any attempt to unify their struggle, to evolve into a global movement, was doomed to lead to disaster, to the gulag archipelago. In France in the 1970s, this ideological task was duly carried out by the group of thinkers known as the *nouveaux philosophes* acting as heralds for the prophet Solzhenitsyn. The performance was easier to stage in France or Italy, where the ideological influence of powerful Communist parties had in the past prevented a discussion of the crimes of the Stalin era. In the United States and Britain, however, the God-that-failed controversy had been played out thirty years earlier, and it was strange to hear it all over again. Or, to put it differently, it was surprising to discover so many Columbuses in America.

I will not dwell on the headline-grabbing *mea culpas* of Susan Sontag at the Solidarity rally in New York City's Town Hall last February. Rather, I will discuss the incomparably more honest and moving article by Jacobo Timerman in these pages [see "Moral Symmetry," March 6]. Timerman, you may recall, condemns both fascism and communism ("Communism is an enemy because it is communism . . . and fascism is what it is . . ."). Personally, I see no reason why one should hand over once-precious names to the adversary, why a movement conceived to abolish all forms of exploitation should be equated with the regime prevailing in a land of repression, why barbed wire should be confused with Marx, or Jaruzelski with the defense of socialism. Does "communist" become an insult because Brezhnev pretends to bear the name? We did not cease to be socialists because Hitler called himself a National Socialist.

Admittedly, it may be awkward to add a qualifier every time one uses the expression "socialist" countries or "Communist" bloc. The difference, however, is not purely semantic. On closer scrutiny, Timerman condemns communism in all its versions, with or without inverted commas. He only condemns capitalism in its most diseased form, fascism—that is to say capitalism run amok. And his movingly written argument also shows just how far a socialist and a liberal can walk together before they have to part company. When, for example, he takes to task Julio Cortázar, the Argentine novelist, for whitewashing Cuba by ignoring the censorship prevailing there, the socialist mutters approvingly, "Yes, freedom is only freedom when it is available to those who think differently." But Timerman casts out the other part of Cortázar's argument, namely that the growth of illiteracy in the countries of Latin America is a form of cultural genocide, and a socialist cannot accept the idea that freedom can be so empty of all social content.

So many monstrosities have been spawned over the last sixty years by Communists under the pretext of contempt for formal or bourgeois freedoms that I would like to strip

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the palimpsest of its Stalinist accretions by going back to the days of the Bolshevik revolution. Accused at the time by Lenin and Trotsky of democratic fetishism, Rosa Luxemburg replied:

> We have never been idol-worshippers of formal democracy. Nor have we been idol-worshippers of socialism or Marxism either. . . . [We] have always revealed the hard kernel of social inequality and lack of freedom hidden under the sweet shell of formal equality and freedom—not in order to reject the latter but to spur the working class into not being satisfied with the shell, but rather, by conquering political power, to create a socialist democracy to replace bourgeois democracy—not to eliminate democracy altogether.

These words, written so long ago, remain valid today and still provide the key to the underlying unity of our struggle in Poland, in El Salvador and in the heartland of Western capitalism.

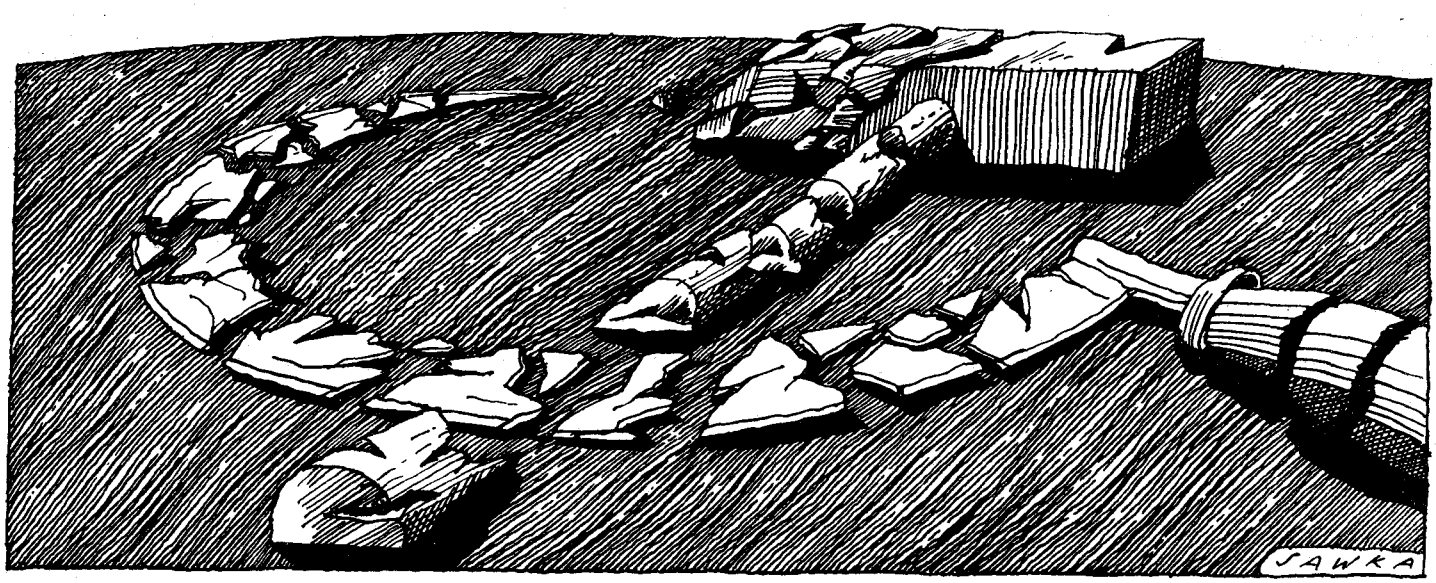
Cracks in the Ice

The establishment of a military dictatorship in Poland, dashing tremendous hopes, gave the right-wing propagandists a golden opportunity to revive the image of "communism" as the evil incarnate and as permanent hell. However horrible the regime in El Salvador, they argue, it is preferable to one from which there is no return. If you don't like the system prevailing at home, you must resign yourself to accepting it as a lesser evil. It would be absurd to reply by denying differences and lumping together, say, Britain and the Greece of the colonels on the ground that the governments of both were forms of "bourgeois dictatorship." On the other hand, the argument drawn from Rosa Luxemburg explains why we are fighting on all fronts at the same time.

It must be added that Poland provokes strange postures on the left as well. Whether bewildered by the curious mixture of class struggle and Catholicism, repelled by memories of Polish anti-Semitism or unable to abandon the fiction of a "socialist" Russia, a substantial section of the Western left has been trying to treat the saga of Solidarity as a thing of the past. If in the right-wing version nothing can change in the Soviet bloc because communism is unredeemable, in this "leftish" version change can only come from above. The trouble with both these theories is that they ignore the facts. The strikes and skirmishes of May are only a reminder. Even before they occurred it was obvious that the Polish labor movement did not begin in August 1980 and that it did not end on December 13, 1981, with Jaruzelski's crackdown. Solidarity was the pioneer in a vast, complex process of reawakening the working people of the Soviet bloc.

What shape this movement will take, how rapidly it will spread and how much the cost in blood will be no one can forecast with precision. One thing is clear, though: we on the democratic left can play a part in influencing the outcome. As outsiders with much more room to maneuver, we must tell Polish resisters that all the enemies of Brezhnev are not automatically their allies, just as we must tell Sandinists they are wrong in refusing to greet a Solidarity delegation. Indeed, it is our duty to repeat stubbornly to the fighters whose vision is often confined to their own terrain that their battles, however distant, are common, that they are part of our joint fight for survival in this nuclear age, a survival that can only be achieved by our struggle all over the globe for mastery over our fate.

There are many possible ways to the Poland station. Efforts are being made to turn this provisional tragedy into a source of confusion, despair and deep division, reviving the Manichean alignments of the cold war. But the Polish crisis may also mark the formation of quite different coalitions. The superpowers in their complicated, conflicting coexistence have certainly one thing in common, a profound hostility to movements *from below*—and rightly so. If the downtrodden and the exploited, the oppressed and all those who try to understand the world in order to change it, rise above the artificial barriers that divide them, they will start to give some historical meaning, on a planetary scale, to the slogan scrawled on the walls in Poland: "The snows of winter will start melting to their horror and the first shoots of spring will begin to blossom for our delight." □



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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Apple-Pie Authoritarians

PHILIP GREEN

POST-CONSERVATIVE AMERICA. *By Kevin Phillips. Random House. 234 pp. $14.50.*

THE NEW RIGHT PAPERS. *Edited by Robert W. Whitaker. St. Martin's Press. 226 pp. $12.95.*

One evening toward the end of the 1950s, the late poet Kenneth Rexroth, popularly thought of as the "father of the Beat generation" and certainly the most effective publicist of Ginsberg, Corso, Ferlinghetti, et al., was asked by Mike Wallace on nationwide television if he would call himself a beatnik. Suddenly the elder statesman looking askance at the prodigal enthusiasms of the young, Rexroth replied, "An entomologist is not a beetle."

Now Kevin Phillips, author of *The Emerging Republican Majority*, coiner of the terms "Sun Belt" and "New Right" and strategist of the Republican Party's white-ethnic-oriented, civil-rights-backlash-inspired "Southern Tilt," has looked on his handiwork and found cause for dismay. With the apparent failure of both Keynesian liberalism and Reaganomics (his judgment), American politics, cut adrift from any rational material moorings, have gone "beyond conservatism" toward the "radicalization of the middle." "Profoundly disturbed" (as his publisher's blurb puts it) by these developments, Phillips concludes *Post-Conservative America* on a somber note: "Today's Sun Belt represents a confluence of Social Darwinism, entrepreneurialism, high technology, nationalism, nostalgia and fundamentalist religion, and any Sun Belt hegemony over our politics has a unique potential . . . to accommodate a drift toward apple-pie authoritarianism." There is another new frontier in American history—but for the first time it may be an antidemocratic frontier.

Phillips, who foresaw the main characteristics of triumphant Reaganism as early as 1969, has a good track record as a prophet. He is certainly correct now to call our attention to the growing disarray of contemporary American politics: the apparent exhaustion of the New Deal tradition; the "Fourth Great Awakening" of religious revival; the transfer of wealth and power from Northeast to Southwest; the combined and powerful effect of antifeminism, fear of sexual "permissiveness," recrudescent racism and post-Vietnam recrimination; as well as, above all, the hastening decomposition of the major parties as repositories of political loyalties and their replacement by the destabilizing forces of mass communications. Like many people nervously looking over their shoulders today, he conjures up the Weimar analogy, though with an intelligent disclaimer:

> Anyone who thinks that the United States might really become a Germany of Hitler is going to be proven very, very wrong. . . . Yet . . . [anyone] who ignores the idea of some kindred underlying dynamics between the German political and cultural reaction of the 1920s and the emerging American reaction to the political and cultural trauma of the last two decades is also making a big mistake.

There is more to be said about the Weimar analogy, though. There can be no "conservative populist revolution," as Phillips calls it, without a failure of leadership on the left and without the appearance of a compelling leadership on the right. Phillips's own conservative politics make it impossible for him to take the idea of a successful left politics seriously, and it is hard to argue with him in other than a wistful vein. But when he warns us of a dramatic new turn in America, he is ringing—in part—the wrong alarm. Phillips repeatedly cautions us to observe this or that group of voters as they dance in the winds of chaos, but we will spend too much time watching the wrong people if that is all we do. The limitation of our system is that the masses themselves, no matter how energized by preachers and teachers, make nothing happen through electoral politics. Leaders do that. Mass moods can support almost any practical politics (as the sudden rediscovery of the nuclear issue demonstrates). Who will be the leaders of the new wave, and what will they set out to do? That is what we really want to know.

Fascism, to give the Weimar analogy its proper name, will not come to an advanced industrial society with entrenched institutions of popular and limited government, at least not in its original form. But fascism is just a name. What the name stands for is one historically specific form of the demobilization of mass, left-wing and working-class activism, and of the deauthorization of democratic politics. Historically, the chief beneficiary of fascism was monopolistic business enterprise, and secondarily—but only very secondarily—some sectors of the petit bourgeoisie. No working social formation can be built with the latter group alone as its base—it is not numerous enough, nor does it control enough labor power or capital. What we want to know, then, is, who is being proposed to play the role in America that monopoly capital finally played in Germany?

The best place to look for an answer to that question is an unheralded collection of essays called *The New Right Papers*. Most of these essays (by such luminaries as William Rusher and Richard Viguerie) are thoroughly predictable; they conjure up the same angry and fearful constituencies Phillips mentions. A few will shock those unfamiliar with the New Right's virulence: Clyde Wilson's attack on sexual libertarianism, for example, can be found almost word for word in Mussolini's collected speeches and in the writings of the Nazis on sex and the family. None of the essays posit a working system of government, though, to replace such liberal institutions as constitutionalism, limited government and interest-group pluralism.

The payoff essay is by Samuel T. Francis, legislative assistant to Senator Jeremiah Denton and self-proclaimed authority on "the world terrorist network." What is the New Right's *political* program? Francis answers:

> As a radical movement, representing rising social forces against an ossified elite, the New Right must abandon the political style of the Old Right. That style, based on the premise that the Old Right represented an establishment, sought to defend the intermediary institutions against the Caesarist, leveling forces of the new managerial class. The managerial class, however, has long since become

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> the establishment and shows signs of abandoning the executive branch as a spearhead of its power-seizure. The New Right, therefore, should make use of the Presidency as its own spearhead against the entrenched elite and should dwell on the fact that the intermediary bodies—Congress, the courts, the bureaucracy, the media, etc.—are the main supports of the elite. The adoption of the Caesarist tactic by the New Right would reflect the historical pattern by which rising classes ally with an executive power to displace the oligarchy that is entrenched in the intermediary bodies.

Of course Caesarism—dictatorship, absolutist government—is not necessarily fascism. But rarely in American history has there been such an explicit call for a typically fascist seizure of power. All the traditional themes are in Francis's piece. The rejection of pluralism and constitutionalism, which recurs through these essays, is evident in the passage quoted above (whenever you see the phrase "the courts" written with a sneer, you know you're in anti-democratic territory). Just prior to that passage, Francis rhapsodizes that "the Domestic Ethic may also lay the basis for a more harmonious relationship between employer and worker, since the place of work itself can be portrayed as an institution no less central than the family or the local community." This is the classical appeal for class harmony, founded in an aggressive nationalism (for which Francis and other essayists in this volume constantly call), and for the "dismantling" of, among others, the "labor bureaucracy," on behalf of a rising class that is now "the exploited victim of the alliance between an entrenched elite and a ravenous proletariat." Mussolini couldn't have said it better (and he did say it).

Above all, Francis rejects laissez faire and calls for "a frank recognition that the classical liberal idea of a night-watchman state is an illusion and that a MAR elite would make use of the state for its own interests as willingly as the present managerial elite does." (MAR stands for "Middle American Radical," a term coined in the early 1970s by Donald I. Warren, the author of *The Radical Center*.) Articulating what is, I think, the real economic ideology of the New Right, Francis calls for the removal of restrictions that impede business enterprise among his Sun Belt, Middle American Radical constituents and the giving of such aid as would stimulate them. His ideal is force-fed growth, if necessary growth based on international expansionism. This endorsement of the activist but *nationalist* state has familiar historical overtones.

The language with which Francis describes the entrenched managerial, bureaucratic, communications and labor elites that are to be displaced by the upsurge of Middle American Radicals does indeed recall the rhetoric of fascism. The old elites are "decadent," "moribund," "cosmopolitan," "ossified," "hedonistic"; they are in their "senescence" and a force only for "self-indulgence." "It is a choice between degeneration and rebirth," he writes, "between death and survival, for survival is not a right or a gift freely granted by the powers that be. Survival, in the jungle or in political societies, is a hard-won prize that depends ultimately on power itself."

It is instructive to compare this prototypical language of authoritarian appeal (which always characterizes its opponents in terms of degeneracy) with the language of McCarthyism. For all McCarthy's occasional references to "Commie rats" and his denunciations of "twenty years of treason," for him and his followers the enemy of the American way of life was ultimately *external*. Those who were to be read out of the body politic (or worse) were spies, traitors or dupes; un-Americans were literally un-American. Ideas were purged primarily because they were foreign and alien, instruments of the Communist movement for world supremacy.

This definition of "the enemy" yielded diminishing returns. Not all that many Americans could really be agents of a foreign power, and the more you turned up, the less likely you were to convince people that any who remained were clearly and presently dangerous. But now the definition of "the enemy" has changed. The enemy is *internal*: it is us, us and our degenerate, cosmopolitan, relativistic, secular ideas. It is a *class* (here Francis's analysis is borrowed from the neoconservative wing of the New Right) that is entrenched in power and must be removed, root and branch, by overturning an outdated political system. McCarthyism was a threat to the civil liberties of specific individuals or groups but never a real threat to the continuation of the constitutional regime itself. Indeed, those

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liberals who supported the loyalty-security purge did so on the grounds that Communists were illiberal and anti-pluralist and had to be purged in the name of democratic pluralism. Today, the traditional American doctrines of pluralism, liberalism and constitutionalism are the enemy, and *that* is a revolutionary claim. Order, discipline, traditional values, world power: not one of these (except the last) is inherently a vice. But they are not the special virtues of democracy; they are the special values of the New Right. These revolutionaries do not, like some radicals, want to make democracy more democratic; they want to get rid of it. And they have defined their enemies in such a way that that is exactly what they will have to do to overcome them.

As I have said, fascism is only one historically specific outcome of a general tendency. What then of Phillips's prediction, that we may be in for an Americanized version of that tendency? How serious is the threat to liberal constitutionalism?

At the moment, I think, the ultimate threat is not very serious, for three important reasons. First, the continuing dedication of conservative elites to the anti-statist siren song of the "free market" renders them relatively immune to calls for Caesarism. I have never been impressed by the alleged attachment of traditional conservatives to civil liberties, even though Barry Goldwater offers a cheering breath of fresh air in that respect. But as classical liberals from John Stuart Mill to Milton Friedman have pointed out, the logic of the free market in commodities and the free market in ideas is the same logic—and fascism demands the rejection of both. Francis's program requires an intellectual revolution in the American capitalist class and among some of its strongest supporters. Though not an impossibility, it is hardly likely.

Second, as Hitler found out, a managerial capitalist society *needs* capitalist managers; any leader who takes too seriously the notion that they are "decadent" and "degenerate" is not going to be able to govern a capitalist society. The Sun Belt is not going to produce enough political and economic elites all by itself. If the New Right can persuade the various managerial elites to give up religious freedom, liberal sexual mores, a businesslike rather than an apocalyptic view of the Communist world and so forth as the price for more direct and rational control of the economy, it might be able to cut a deal. At the moment, though, neither side to this transaction seems likely to take the necessary first step. It will be especially difficult for the New Right to get much support for a platform that would require nontraditionalists to give up virtually all their values in return for a promise of "economic growth" that is going to be harder and harder to realize.

Third, despite all the halfhearted encomiums to "blue-collar workers" and "unionized labor," the program of the New Right demands suppression of the interests of organized labor (and of the entire "Frost Belt") whenever they conflict with "the national interest" or the interest of Middle American Radicals. There won't be many wars in the nuclear age that can make this overriding appeal work for long: the Falkland Islands game can only be played so many times.

In short, there are just too many Americans in perfectly good standing whom the New Right wants to purge, suppress and cast onto the ash heap of history; and there is not yet an obvious leadership class prepared to carry out that task on its behalf.

Phillips's fearful scenario is not beyond possibility. It is just unlikely, compared with the prospect of continuing to muddle through and paper over the contradictions in the world capitalist political economy. At the moment, therefore, it would be going too far to say that the stench of an American version of fascism is in the air, Sam Francis's best efforts to the contrary. The odor is detectable, though. And whatever the outcome, along the way a lot of damage will almost certainly be done to the liberal values of tolerance, cosmopolitanism, freedom of choice and, yes, secular humanism. Next time around, perhaps Kevin Phillips will be more careful in the demons he chooses to conjure up. □

SALTCOD RED

Curled red locks back over the shoe-sole parabola
bald strip indenting your scalp, and fanning out in a bulb
in back; thick cockney accent; eye wrinkles more deeply furrowed
on the left side, left check always lifted for the chuckles
or chronic burst of laughter—your happiest trait—that threads
in and out of your story-telling gabble; fine figure
of a tall man, still the *impress* cut by your lordly swagger
despite round-shouldered stoop and swaybacked cave-in of spine
(lordosis on one side twinned by paunch on the other) . . . You muse
upon the years lost in Foreign Service in the Veldt, worse
in the African Bush—you *bore* your malarial fevers
(no water for days at a stretch), while others in the camp
sank into coma, weekly, you left with seasonal joint aches,
arthritic twinges—no more; and now, even as I whine
my paranoid asides, terrified of machete-armed
Jamaican muggers hiding behind each rock or shrub, you bolt
erect! You add three inches to your six foot sag-frame,
anterior and posterior S-curves flattened into Youth's
ramrod physique reemergent ("No thieving riffraff will dare
to hit on *us*!), these weeks a well-earned respite from bonanza
years in fresh-frozen fish, back home in frigid Montreal!
Little do the native islanders guess your company
exports tons of Canada saltcod which, coupled with local
ackee redfruit, makes up the favorite national food:
SALTFISH & ACKEE a native emblem displayed in all diners
and speakeasies, alike. I grin at all jokes heard, jokes unheard;
I must see your profile, half-read those lips to decipher
your rich brogue (lampoonings of all local foibles) . . . Too shy
to beg you to repeat punch lines, I'm happy to catch tuneful
song lyrics of your badinage if I miss the sly words. . . .

Laurence Lieberman

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Midwestern Original

MEREDITH TAX

RIPENING: Selected Work, 1927-1980. *By Meridel Le Sueur. Edited by Elaine Hedges. The Feminist Press. 287 pp. $7.95.*

Eighty-two years old and still writing, Meridel Le Sueur embodies more than half a century of cultural history. *Ripening* shows us the varied times of her life: as a Midwestern writer and advocate of sexual freedom in the 1920s; as a Red who recorded the plight of women on the dole and the beginnings of the C.I.O. in the 1930s; as a diarist of the cold war years, trying to keep the faith; and, in her latest incarnation, as a feminist saint and earth mother. It is no wonder that she has become a revered elder, almost a cult figure, both to young radical novelists and to searchers after a female principle in writing. We children of the 1960s, cut off from the experiences of the last generation by the great dry gulch Le Sueur calls "the dark time," hunger for revolutionary ancestors.

Le Sueur connects us not only with the 1920s and 1930s but with an older tradition of indigenous Midwestern radicalism. Her grandmother was a pioneer, going rifle in hand to homestead in Oklahoma, touring the prairie towns for the Women's Christian Temperance Union, opening up the land to political ideas: "Simultaneously with building the sod shanties, breaking the prairie, schools were started, Atheneums and debating and singing societies founded, poetry written and recited on winter evenings. The latest theories of the rights of man were discussed along with the making of a better breaking plow." Le Sueur's mother, Marian Wharton, who inherited this spirit of ferment, stole her children across state lines when she ran away from her preacher husband at a time when child custody went automatically to the father. She barnstormed the Midwest as a feminist speaker until she met her second husband, Arthur Le Sueur, at the People's College, a correspondence school in Fort Scott, Kansas. Together they helped develop the famous Haldeman-Julius Little Blue Books, socialist classics in pamphlet form that sold for a nickel and brought Marxism to the Great Plains.

Arthur Le Sueur was a lawyer, a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World and for a short time the Socialist mayor of Minot, North Dakota. The Le Sueurs' house on Dayton Avenue in St. Paul was a haven for traveling dissidents—she remembers Eugene Debs sitting in the kitchen reciting the scaffold oration of John Brown—and it became a storm center during World War I: "We were shot at, our books were rifled and burned in our front yard . . . rocks were thrown through our windows. . . . We hardly dared go to school." Yet even the violence and turmoil nourished her: "I was in a place and a time when people were coming out of illusion. . . . I went to the best college."

Le Sueur is a feminist, a regional writer, a writer about both the pull of sexual desire and the harsh choices of life in the Depression; she is also a reporter who tells of strikes and daily privations. When she is good, it is because so many different things are compressed in her writing. Her 1945 novella *O Prairie Girl* brings out all the contradictions in its narrator, a young farm girl who has just arrived in St. Paul: her resilience and passivity, her love of life and flirtations with death. Her lover, Butch, a drifter who beats her and involves her in a disastrous holdup, is similarly portrayed, shaped by longings in conflict with the social forces that press down on him and with his own brutalized past. There is no way their affair can end well. Le Sueur tells their story in pared-down vernacular poetry: "All right, Butch said, that's enough for me. I know when I'm lucky. That's all I need to change my luck. . . . I don't need a rabbit's foot. I don't need to take a black girl. I don't need an eleven. I don't need nothing. Tomorrow is going to be silk."

This compressed voice is different from Le Sueur's earlier style, which was influenced by D. H. Lawrence and Sherwood Anderson and Zona Gale:

Meredith Tax is the author of The Rising of Women *(Monthly Review) and, most recently, of* Rivington Street *(Morrow), a novel.*

War Victims in Lebanon Need Your Help

Once again the people of Lebanon are victims of Israeli military action against Palestinian and Syrian forces in the country. A telex from an American Friends Service Committee relief worker in Beirut tells of the incalculable suffering of civilians. "Over 600,000 fleeing the bombing are homeless, refugees in their own land. Overcrowding in Beirut unbearable. Families now living in public gardens and in the streets. Hospitals full, electricity out. Emergency aid desperately needed."

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"Down on her hands and knees by the canna-bed she could see the white curved sprouts like scimitars just thrust from the earth. She put her finger on one of them and felt them hard and cold but with a moisture and this strong urgency, this upward thrust of power." Both styles are different from what she is doing now: prose poems that are a wilderness of piled-up words, agricultural imagery and sentences that trail on forever. This is from a work in progress, "The Origins of Corn":

> Given to us from brown hands, grown in democratic weather, from the place of massacre, continental coffin made by the conquistadors hid the corn for future summer, thrown like a seed ball from people to people in twenty-five thousand years of a mothering congregation of protein, of corn nuptials, cohesions, solidarity, in the face of dangers, plunderers, thieves, predators, speculators, dice throwers, disease, we lay underground with corn, hoarding the endosperm, preserving inside the shuck ancestral bridal arrayment, communal goodness, and old maps of Indian ancestors marking the Pollen Road. The road of genetic fulfillment and endurance, comrades of surge, germinal explosions in millions of seeds.

When Le Sueur's stylistic and thematic elements are in balance, she is like no one else. But when any one element—the pat answering of the 1930s, the agricultural feminism of the 1980s—predominates, her work goes wildly out of control. In the 1930s and 1940s she was able to keep it all in sync: the bitter details of daily poverty, the sexual urges, the oppression of women, the plight of the land and its people all oscillate in relationship to one another. Her participation in the left-wing cultural networks of the time gave her work an audience and a context that strengthened its social side—the individual side was always strong—and nourished her. Stories like "I Was Marching" and the harsh, moving vignettes of "Women on the Breadlines" and "Women are Hungry" tell us about the daily lives of women in the Depression with remarkable vividness:

> It's one of the great mysteries of the city where women go when they are out of work and hungry. There are not many women in the bread line. There are no flop houses for women as there are for men, where a bed can be had for a quarter or less. You don't see women lying on the floor at the mission in the free flops. . . . I've lived in cities for many months broke, without help, too timid to get in bread lines. I've known many women to live like this until they simply faint on the street from privations, without saying a word to anyone. A woman will shut herself up in a room until it is taken away from her, and eat a cracker a day and be as quiet as a mouse so there are no social statistics concerning her . . . going through the streets ashamed, sitting in libraries, parks, going for days without speaking to a living soul like some exiled beast, keeping the runs mended in her stockings.

Some of the younger women slip in and out of prostitution. Others go on the road, riding freight trains, changing into a new kind of tough, isolated woman: "Keep alone as much as you can, look out for yourself. Keep away from men and marriage because there isn't anything in it for a girl but a horde of children to be left with. Lie low, get along, beg, borrow or steal, go a lone wolf's way." Others are caught by social-service agencies and put in homes; they throw a woman off relief if they think she has sex and try to sterilize her under the eugenics laws if she get pregnant:

> They want to have her sterilized and put into the home for girls at Faribault. Mabel is from a farm in Minnesota; she likes men pretty well and isn't clever at keeping herself out of trouble. Last year she had a baby, so of course all the charities are down on her . . . they gave her an intelligence test when she was scared stiff anyway, and it was about forests and she has never seen more than one tree at a time in her life, just growing between the sidewalk and the curb. Of course she failed pretty thoroughly, because she was shaking like a leaf all the time because of fright about having a baby. If they had asked her how a girl wolf gets by in a city, where to get the best handouts, how to catch a guy that will take you to a show maybe, and a feed after, and how to get away without giving him anything, she would have passed one hundred percent. They asked her about the wrong kind of jungle.

Nobody else writes about these things in this way. Nor have I read anyone else with Le Sueur's grasp of the historical development of the tensions between men and women in the West. *Ripening* contains a powerful short story, "Our Fathers," about a young girl being raised by her mother and grandmother, both embittered women deserted by their husbands for one social cause or another and left, isolated and poor, to raise their children, find consolation in religion and lay out their husbands when they came home to die, singing "Like an old wolf baying. The only love songs she ever had . . . 'I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,' and never going an inch along with Samuel."

Le Sueur does not write like this anymore. In her recent work, womankind is Nature, fecund and suffering. She has found a new audience in the women's movement, particularly, it seems, in its "spiritual" wing, and this has not been helpful to her work. Nature imagery, earth-goddess mythology and lyrical excess were always there, but as subordinate elements in a complex style. They have now become the whole shebang. Her introduction to her work in progress, "Memorial," indicates what's going on:

SNARLS

From the fields, he braids his way into my nap
with a careful count of our hay. Mindful, I
stand behind his chair and remove bits of straw

from his tangled blond hair. He tells me each
bale must pay the property taxes, but he weights
the thinnest straw to burden me until we split

hairs for property. I stare at his crooked part.
I comb through the broken bits until distressed,
I stand apart. I warn him of the darkness

of my locks. He leans toward the table and laughs
at a knife crossing the circle of a plate. Then,
he shakes his head, laughs again, and I wake.

Susan Baumann

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> We will journey into a spoke leading to the vortex toward the central energy of a global form, away from the linear narrative form so highly developed by the male scientific aggressive orientation of the past. It is a story of three women: mother, whore, and intellectual, searching for their dead and their past. They all go to the tavern where they come together in a communal memory and illumination of their mutual history and suffering. The three women leave together, fall into the dead mine as into hell, find each other in their terrible and illumined past, draw together melded by suffering, and find the great Iowa Sow in the night and sleep in the true and mythical identity and cyclic return of all female nature.

Throughout her career, Le Sueur has been published primarily by the alternative press, and her rediscovery in the 1970s was due almost entirely to the work of a few small publishing houses, notably West End Press. Because of this, her audience has been largely a movement one. Writers dependent on the movement are likely to be affected when it becomes one-sided or daffy, and since the distribution system prevents them from reaching the very workers they write about, no corrective counterinfluence can come from that direction. They tend to be strongest when the movement is, but they are needed most when it isn't.

Le Sueur is a writer who has done her best to be openly on the side of the people. She has earned her living as a waitress, an attendant in a mental hospital, a sweatshop worker, a chauffeur—but seldom as a writer. She has lived as a single mother in a single room, working a job all day and putting her head under the tap at night to stay awake and write. Unevenness of development is inevitable under these circumstances. But here is a writer who is not an alienated *poète maudit*, a mandarin intellectual or a merchant whose commodity is words; a writer who has tried all her life to get to the grit of things; a writer who is neither contemptuous nor afraid of who's out there, who can still say with Sandburg, the people, yes, the people. It's a little romantic, but really, you could do a lot worse. □

Death Girls

BRINA CAPLAN

SLEEPWALKING. *By Meg Wolitzer. Random House. 215 pp. $12.50.*

Psychologists say that a suicidal woman usually goes quietly. The explosive bullet or the public plunge to the sidewalk is not for her; instead, she unobtrusively attends to the business of turning on the gas, or swallowing the pills, or filling the garage with carbon monoxide. By arranging a quiet death at home, she conceals violence even as she acts it out. No rage here, her preparations suggest, only despair; no assault on domestic routines, just a weary completion of them.

The deaths of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton confront us with patterns of this sort—as does their work. On the page, as in their suicides, we read knotted disclosures and denials of hostility. Violent impulses, these messages aver, are features of my life but are not mine. In Plath's only novel, for instance, displaced rage makes the world appear cold, distant, killing—characteristics whose origin in her own psyche the autobiographical heroine need never admit. She can remain the victim in a bell jar, "blanked and stopped as a dead baby"—although the brutality of such an image belies innocence while asserting it. The Lady Lazaruses of modern literature leave us, therefore, with two unresolved mysteries. First, how does an impulse become intense enough to threaten consciousness and, eventually, life itself? Second, do suicidal impulses have a domestic history—do they begin as well as end in the home?

Meg Wolitzer's first novel, *Sleepwalking*, raises these questions along with the ghost of a fictive Lady Lazarus, the poet Lucy Ascher, dead by her own hand at 22. Her posthumously published journal, which lends its title to the novel, has become a campus cult book. It appeals especially to young women such as Claire Danziger, the heroine of *Sleepwalking*, a Swarthmore undergraduate stalled in adolescence by the pain of growing up: "Lucy Ascher seemed to say that we have a right to feel the sadness we feel. The world is bleak; the air is cold."

Claire uses Lucy's comprehensive sadness to control her own confusion about loss. Five years previously, her older brother died of leukemia; now, "she could not even picture his face. No one in her family ever talked about him, so it was, she kept telling herself, as if she had made him up." Claire's parents reacted to their son's death by filling their hours with purposeful, rigidly organized activities while maintaining an embittered silence that excludes their younger daughter. Why they take no consolation in her or her older sister remains obscure, to the reader as well as to Claire. But since she can neither relieve nor escape family sorrow, Claire mourns for Lucy, who in turn mourns for a world riddled with decay.

By Claire's second year of college, a studied, obsessive identification with Lucy has classed her among Swarthmore's three "death girls." She finds it all the more surprising, therefore, to be sought out by an indefatigably jolly boy whom she comes to call "Julian the provider." He earns the title. Julian's good will toward Claire is considerable and considerably tried: she hangs up the phone in mid-conversation, stares at him when he jokes and attacks him for being an "innocent, earnest creature." Although he tells a friend of hers, another death girl, that Claire seems to him "overpowering," he never accounts for his desire to be overpowered as often as the plot of *Sleepwalking* requires him to be. Throughout the novel, Julian patiently fulfills—indeed, embodies—a romantic ideal, remaining faithful even when Claire suddenly abandons him.

Sensing that she must choose between her identity as a death girl and her attraction to Julian, Claire leaves school in a panic of uncertainty and makes a secret pilgrimage to Lucy's girlhood home. There, ostensibly employed as household help, she spends two weeks with the poet's haunted parents and her unmentioned presence; like Claire's own mother and father, the Aschers have not yet resolved their grief. "When you really let go," Lucy's mother reflects, "you were saying goodbye forever. No one ever wanted to talk about that aspect; it was universally considered too painful."

As the Aschers' surrogate daughter, Claire magically releases them from the past:

Brina Caplan writes regularly on fiction for The Nation. *She is the recipient of a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies.*

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> She had come to them when they needed her. Her timing could not have been better. There was a certain point during the course of extended grief when one had to have a change, something had to be filled in.

Claire certainly fills in, sleeping in Lucy's bed and occupying her place at the table. While sorting through old clothes, she steps into Lucy's dress if not, in fact, into her shoes. After two weeks of continual *déjà vu*, the Aschers are renewed, and Claire finds herself transformed. Having retreated into Lucy's environment, she must finally face the difference between herself and the lost, insatiable poet:

> She hadn't even been aware of a competition until that moment. Now, alone in Lucy's room, she felt . . . superior. She was living, she breathed more than cold, underground death air. The pulse in her neck jumped once again. She placed her fingers over it lightly, as though it were a cricket she was cupping in the grass.

By the time Julian arrives at the Aschers' to argue the claims of love, he need not argue: Claire is ready to depart.

Wolitzer's novel enters two deeply troubled homes, one that fails to mourn a lost son, another that cannot cease to mourn a suicidal daughter. Because *Sleepwalking* treads on disturbed domestic ground, it might well explore the territory with more thoroughness and leave it with less ease. After all, families like the Aschers and the Danzigers, shattered by the death of a child, are likely to experience emotions as violent as their loss—not only sadness but hate, terror and outrage. Moreover, until the jagged edges of feeling are located, such families are unlikely to mend. Yet in *Sleepwalking*, neither author nor characters search for them. The Aschers, according to Wolitzer, raised a sometimes psychotic child without experiencing a moment's wrath or even resentment; the Danzigers—who seem to have a lifetime's supply of resentment, all directed at Claire—remain on the periphery of the novel, minor figures without reported inner lives. Ultimately, Julian's rescue of Claire and Claire's rescue of the Aschers depend more on romantic convention than on psychological resolution, for *Sleepwalking* keeps its characters' most difficult emotions out of focus or out of sight.

Moreover, Wolitzer often chooses language that lessens keenness of feeling: her characters fear "closeness" and spot "vulnerability," yearn for "connectedness" and complain of "a void within them." And at times she shares prose habits with the neurasthenic Lucy, who dilutes all intensity with metaphor and can lose any specific feeling within a diffuse, generalized sadness. "'My childhood had no gravity,'" Lucy typically reports,

> "I floated dumbly through it, reaching out to grab for doorknobs, bedposts. I could not grab for people, because early on I would watch my father's face . . . and . . . see that he was doing all he could just to *be*, and that nobody can really do any better. Until there is no longer the possibility of sadness, of isolation, there can be no gravity. We all float by, rootless, taking clumsy astronaut steps and calling it progress."

Evidently, Lucy had a childhood grievance against her father, but, since she sends us off on a moonwalk, we will never discover its nature or cause.

How do impulses achieve the force necessary for self-destruction? How does loss become rage and love mix with terror? *Sleepwalking* asks these questions but fails to find the words that would answer them. While promising us a view of that difficult reality Freudians know as "the romance of the family," this novel settles for the less disturbing fulfillment of romance. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Chan Is Missing
Bob le Flambeur

Chan Is Missing is a mystery movie and appropriately full of clues, blind alleys, suggestive bits of evidence and promising hypotheses. But at the end, instead of one of those gratifying scenes in which everything is made clear, we are shown a series of quietly beautiful shots of the streets and buildings in San Francisco's Chinatown. When the lights come up, Chan is still missing. Since we are, almost all of us, Westerners and therefore made uneasy by unanswered questions, you would expect us to file out of the theater in a mood of ill-tempered perplexity. In fact, the picture is as completely satisfying as it is specifically uninformative.

Wayne Wang, who produced, directed and (with Isaac Cronin and Terrei Seltzer) wrote the movie, is himself technically a Westerner. Though born in Hong Kong, he was raised in San Francisco and is wise to its ways and lingo. But like his characters, he has a mind that can slip back and forth from East to West so unobtrusively as to cause hardly a ripple. His plot is neatly, enticingly developed, yet the puzzle of what happened to Chan is not his subject but only the occasion for it. The subject is how people behave toward one another; at a deeper level, it is a wry but cheerful acknowledgment that what we don't know is as much a part of our experience as, and probably no less important than, what we do know.

But I mustn't approach *Chan Is Missing* with a solemnity that would make Wang and his troupe chuckle. Here are the facts, such as they are. Jo (Wood May) and his nephew, Steve (Marc Hayashi), are a couple of Chinese-American taxi drivers who want to buy a cab and go into business for themselves. To do so, they must first get hold of a taxi medallion, and they entrust the negotiations to one of their colleagues, Chan Hung, a recent arrival from Taiwan who is thought to be a particularly agile bargainer. They also trust Chan with $4,000, and after waiting several days for him to reappear at the garage they begin to wonder if that move was prudent.

Jo is a tiny man, sloppy of dress and neat of movement. His habitual gait is a short-paced jog that suggests the weight of a yoke across the shoulders. Jo's face is deeply creased and impassive; his speech is spare and succinct; his eyes are hooded, masking his enjoyment of folly, quite often his own. Steve, a head taller and a generation cockier, has mastered the "like, man," expletive-laden speech of his age group. He protests with a satisfied grin when Chan's daughter (Emily Yamasaki) calls him a Chinese Richard Pryor. Steve is impatient and worried; he wants to go to the police. Jo is fatalistic and patiently methodical; he points out that the two of them know a lot more about Chan's ways and care much more about the $4,000 than the cops possibly could.

So Jo and Steve, but especially Jo, poke about in Chinatown. They visit Chan's favorite restaurant; they ask for news of him at an old-folks center, where he often dropped in to lend a hand. He has not been seen recently at a language school for recent arrivals, and when they track down his former wife, she shrugs

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him off as a hopelessly unassimilated coolie. They stake out his room, and in a pocket of some clothes he has left there, they find newspaper clippings about an elderly Chinese man who killed a lifelong friend in an argument as to whether Taiwanese or mainland banners should be carried in a local parade. Under the seat of Chan's cab, Jo discovers an automatic, wrapped in a mechanic's rag. He is advised on excellent authority that Chan has gone back to Taiwan, and with equal assurance that he has disappeared into the Communist underground. He is urged to look for a certain woman, but with no hint of where she might be found. There comes a moment when Jo thinks himself a hunted man. He takes to looking over his shoulder, to staring in his rear-view mirror. His heart goes out to Chan.

All in all, Jo and Steve find out a good deal about their quarry. It seems clear that he was something more than a cab driver with a gift for tricky transactions, but just what he was, or where he went, they never find out. One day Chan's daughter returns the money, without comment, and the quest ends.

Chan Is Missing is witty and shrewd; it is enchanting from the start and increasingly so as it proceeds. Primarily that is because the movie is fragrant with friendliness. Jo is a superbly friendly man. He approaches everyone—lawyer and short-order cook, sharp businessman and naïvely enthusiastic language coach—with the same modest confidence. It is an attitude innate in the man, but sustained by the atmosphere of Chinatown. People there do what they can to help. In this case, they are no help at all, but they share with Jo and Steve a common lack of knowledge. They are all brothers in ignorance, and that, the picture seems to say, is the great solace of the human condition.

Wang is a fine director. His actors, from leads to passers-by in the street, endow their characters with striking and, for the most part, endearing personalities; his grainy, black-and-white photography (Michael Chin is the cameraman) has the depth and range of the best lithography. And Wang is also a capable businessman; he made *Chan Is Missing* for less than $20,000.

Jean-Pierre Melville was a member of the "New Wave," that group of French directors who for a time in the 1950s seemed to pre-empt the screen. He is remembered in the United States as the

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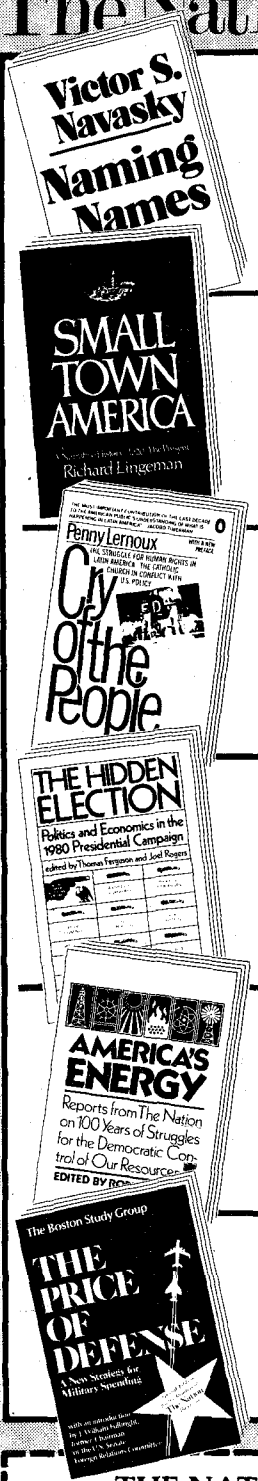
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director of Jean Cocteau's *Les Enfants Terribles*, made in 1950. Six years later he wrote, produced and directed *Bob le Flambeur*, which only now is being released commercially in this country. One enthusiast has asserted that *Breathless* would have been "inconceivable without the precedent set by *Bob le Flambeur* four years before."

Melville's picture is fairly marinated in the atmosphere of the Parisian underworld, its meticulous black-and-white photography (by Henri Decaë) setting the theatrical "documentary" style for the "American" crime movies to come. Jean-Luc Godard pays allusive tribute to it in *Breathless*, but Roger Duchesne, who plays the title role (*flambeur* is slang for gambler), now seems to me closer to Jean Gabin than to Jean-Paul Belmondo, whose sensational performance made the later movie famous.

However influential *Bob le Flambeur* may have been at the time, today it strikes me as a fairly routine example of the romantic caper film. Bob is a reformed crook and inveterate gambler. One of his oldest friends is a police inspector (Guy Decomble). He takes under his wing Anne (Isabel Corey), a heedless girl who is paddling about in the nightlife of Montmartre. Paolo (Daniel Cauchy), another of Bob's protégés, is a young layabout whose father had been killed some years earlier during a holdup. He and Anne team up for a time, until she wanders off with a villainous pimp and occasional stool pigeon.

Bob's luck at cards turns sour and then, as luck would have it, he learns of a chance to crack the safe of the Deauville casino for 800 million francs. There follow the now-predictable ingenious planning and meticulous rehearsal of the heist, and on the day appointed, Bob and his reconstituted gang set off for the coast and untold riches, though by then they know that Anne has spilled the plan to her pimp. This seemed to me foolhardy beyond probability, but then Bob is by definition a reckless man, and his persistence seems likely enough by comparison with the "ironic" twist whereby Melville brings the yarn to its lethal conclusion.

Bob le Flambeur is a pleasant enough thriller, but for this sort of picture you need a magnetic personality, a rogue you can take to your heart. Though the bold and honorable Bob is said to be the hero of his Montmartre neighborhood, Duchesne plays him as colorlessly as professional gamblers make a point of being. It is a deflating touch of realism in an otherwise romantic lark. □

THEATER.

RICHARD GILMAN

Nine

A couple of times a year, my armor of cynicism about the commercial theater gets pierced, and I feel the same sense of outrage that any person with a naïve love of the stage would feel. *Nine* is such an occasion. That it was one of the big winners at the recent Tony Awards ceremony, Broadway's ritual of self-congratulation, scarcely disturbs me; I've no more illusions about those prizes being genuine judgments of merit than I have about the Academy Awards. What does trouble me greatly, though, to the point where I reach for the emperor's-new-clothes button, is the way in which the theatergoing public has been duped about this "musical comedy."

I put those words in quotes because I found the music of *Nine* derivative and pedestrian, and its humor nonexistent. But those things aren't the only grounds for disliking the show. They may be grounds for boredom or irritation, but not for detestation, which is what I felt. Esthetically, morally and socially, *Nine* (book by Arthur Kopit, music and lyrics by Maury Yeston, directed by Tommy Tune) is a nearly perfect example of how Broadway feeds on itself and on other areas of culture, how it continually borrows, traduces and corrupts.

As is generally known, *Nine* takes off from Federico Fellini's film *8½*, that wonderful story of a director who's reached a creative impasse. The director in *Nine*, whose name is Guido Contini, is also at a point of arrest, but it's anything but a creative block. As his wife says, all his movies have made money, and his problem is that he can't come up with an idea for another hit.

The main reason for this is that he's in Venice; Venice is a romantic place, and there are simply too many women making demands on him. In fact, so many women are clawing at him and singing to him and throwing themselves at his feet (when he isn't throwing himself at theirs) that his long-suffering, astonishingly dopey wife, whom of course he says he loves *more* than the others, feels compelled to say, "this is

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ist not my idea of a successful marage." Among the women are many alians of various ages, a lipsticked nun nown as Our Lady of the Spa, a uartet of beefy German actresses, a rench chanteuse named Liliane La leur and Guido's mother—who gives ints of having amatory designs on him erself.

Guido is the only man in the cast, and you didn't know more about *Nine* han that, you might think it was a eminist show. In truth, it's the most obnoxiously male chauvinist piece of vork that's appeared in recent years. Raul Julia, a rather good actor in the ionmusical things I've seen him do, sits iround with a complacent smile (when ie isn't slightly grimacing because it's ill become simply *too much*) and listens o himself being sung to or about. My favorite number in the latter category is a ballad of his wife's, one stanza of which is this: "My husband makes movies/some men catch fish/some men bake bread/some men buy stocks/some men punch clocks." The last rhyme—*stocks, clocks*—is rivaled by that in a line of another song: "*Send* me a love that will *mend* me with love."

I see no point in giving more details of this wretched tale. What seems, however, to have impressed viewers who were capable of recognizing the foolishness of the book—as well as the way it insults Fellini, the creative spirit and all women—is the staging and direction by Tommy Tune. Tune is the hottest director in New York City right now, praised for his "inventiveness" and "daring," but it's a magpie's inventiveness and a brat's daring. His direction is an anthology of every aspect of previous avant-garde staging; every dance and song, every tableau comes with what I might call a "high-tech" vocabulary, full of pizazz and sleek as chrome. His seductions of the audience are really panderings—up-to-date, *au courant*, but panderings nevertheless. And *Nine*, with its glossy vulgarity and repellent sophistication, is a splendid vehicle for his talents. □

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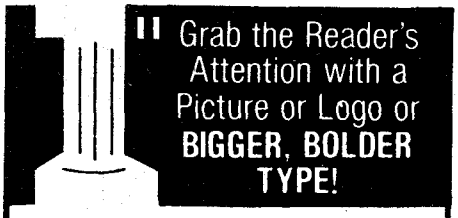

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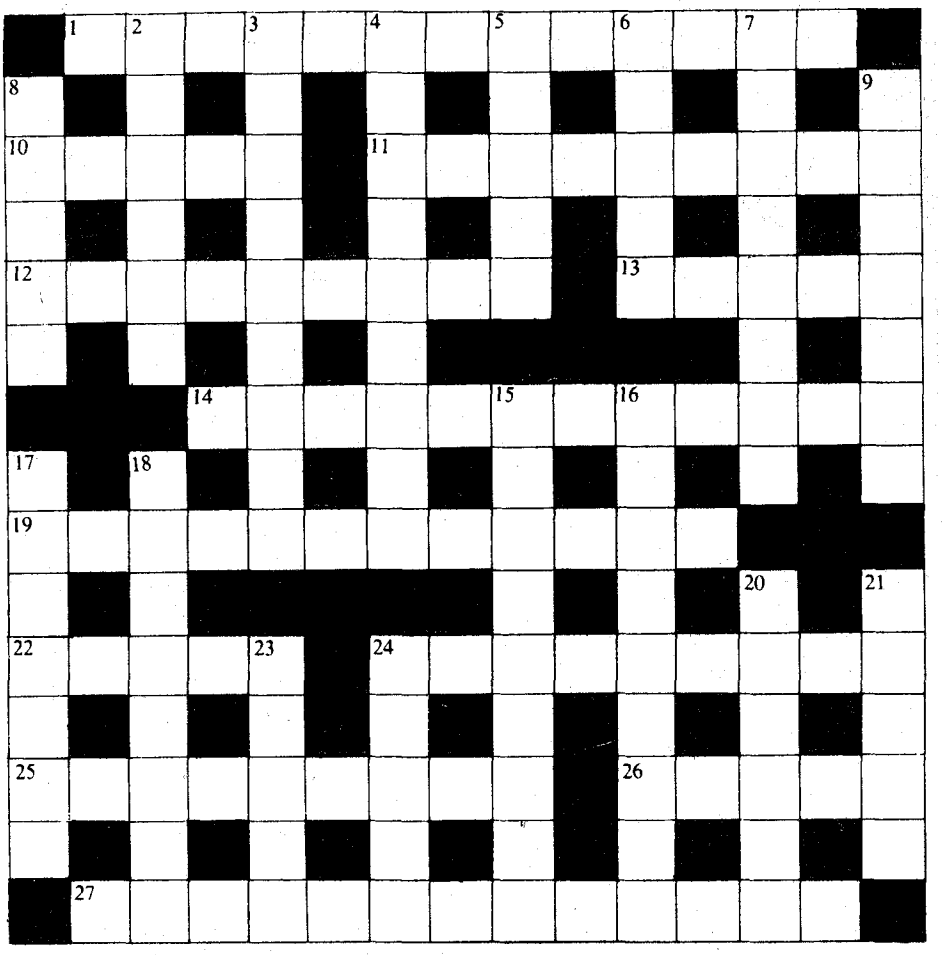

ACROSS

1 What cocktail diplomats indulge in? (It's part policy, and that's wrong!) (5,8)
10 High ranking sort of marine that is colorful—this secret being a war-time story. (5)
11 The way of mischance—well, at least one way! (9)
12 The jewel of Shakespeare's toad? (One might recall a person being late.) (9)
13 Rustic, but looks all right in yellow, to start with. (5)
14 The opposite of woman's tears might deserve at least a short sentence. (12)
19 Larder, perhaps—Mom and Pop might be associated with a little one. (7,5)
22 There's a belief here I don't miss a trick, obviously. (13)
24 Involving gelatin in a mixture. (9)
25 An outfit that looks like it's for Theophilus rather than Jean Jacques. (9)
26 Pale, just like a female! (5)
27 Pole bogged down, being especially conservative. (5-2-3-3)

DOWN

2 Wandering like Carroll's bat? (6)
3 How to make sense of a slattern. (9)
4 How Elgar's circumstantial partner is presented? (9)
5 Possibly cruel and filthy, proverbially. (5)
6 Fawn more like a Milne creature? (5)
7 Only the males have a racket, and singularly, it's fair enough! (8)
8 Bound to be a tough sort. (5)
9 One can't say they didn't care for horses! (7)
15 The kind of suit that seems to be against belief. (9)
16 Shoot, perhaps, like a regiment in formation. (9)
17 Stogies especially made for solipsists. (7)
18 End position, perhaps kicked over. (4,4)
20 The Preserver who teams up with the Creator and the Destroyer. (6)
21 Past state of suffering. (5)
23 Part of the Greek alphabet, thus Latin sounds pleasant. (5)
24 The resin of kernel emissions. (5)

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